



WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG

Collected Poems

TWO BOOKS AND THE DADA PERIODICAL RECORD

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers | Los Angeles, 2026

Collected Poems

Walter Conrad Arensberg

A Critical Reading Edition

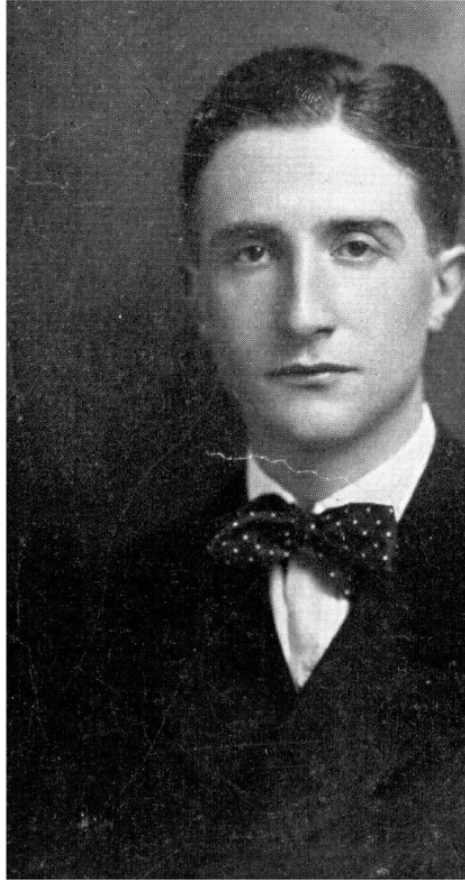
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Archival Images

A short selection from the source record



Walter Conrad Arensberg in the Harvard Class Album, 1900.



The Arensbergs' New York apartment, photographed by Charles Sheeler, circa 1919.



Fig. 1. Walter Arensberg, signed passport photograph, 1928. Gelatin silver print, 3 x 3 inches. Private Collection, New York.

Walter Conrad Arensberg, signed passport photograph, 1928.

Editorial Note

This reading edition is transcribed from the original scans of **Poems** (1914) and **Idols** (1916), not from an earlier reset edition. It retains poem order, stanza structure, meaningful line indents, speaker headings, subtitles, epigraphs, and source italics. Narrow-measure physical wraps and hanging continuations have been rejoined where the wider page permits. Each late Dada work is reset with its spatial relationships approximated and is followed by a facsimile of its first publication.

The erratum supplied in **Rogue** is adopted for the final word of “ING”: **garsis**, not the misprinted **ralsis**. Arensberg’s prose “Note to ‘The Afternoon of a Faun’” is retained as authorial apparatus after the translations. Publication notes identify the selected source after every poem.

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Introduction

Walter Conrad Arensberg began as a polished Symbolist poet and ended his brief publishing career by treating language like a readymade: stretched across pages, fragmented into mathematical propositions, and stripped of ordinary sense. Between those points lie *Poems* (1914), *Idols* (1916), translations from French, German, and Italian, wartime sonnets, and seven radical works printed in *Rogue*, *The Blind Man*, 391, and *TNT*. His literary experiment belonged to the same life that made his New York apartment a center of American Dada and his Hollywood house an unparalleled private museum of Duchamp, modern European art, pre-Columbian objects, and Renaissance books. This edition restores the full poetic record in chronological order and places the late typographic works beside facsimiles of their first appearances.

Biography

Walter Conrad Arensberg was born in Pittsburgh on April 4, 1878, the eldest child of Conrad Christian Arensberg, president and part owner of a successful crucible-steel company, and his second wife, Flora Belle Covert. He entered Harvard in 1896, studied English and philosophy, edited the *Harvard Monthly* from 1898 to 1900, graduated in 1900 with honors, and served as class poet. Wallace Stevens, a classmate and later friend, was already writing poetry there, but Arensberg was then the more publicly established young man of letters. After graduation he traveled in Europe, returned briefly to Harvard for graduate study in 1903, and worked as a reporter in New York between 1904 and 1906. In 1907 he married Mary Louise Stevens, known as Louise, who became his collaborator in collecting and patronage.

Arensberg's first literary phase joined late nineteenth-century aestheticism to French Symbolism. *Poems* appeared from Houghton Mifflin in 1914 and moved between Parisian scenes, musical lyrics, sonnets, dramatic fragments, and translations of Ronsard, Du Bellay, Baudelaire, Laforgue, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Nerval, Goethe, Heine, and Foscolo. *Idols* followed in 1916. Its short-lined modernist poems, wartime satires, and translations of Mallarmé and Dante show an abrupt loosening of syntax and form. Poems from these books circulated through *Trend*, *Rogue*, and *Others*, the magazine and anthology associated with Alfred Kreymborg's experimental circle. In late 1916 Arensberg's "ING" broke decisively with his earlier verse; six further works

through 1919 used spatial composition, pseudo-mathematical argument, semantic collision, and prose without narrative continuity.

The change was inseparable from the Arensbergs' New York life. Following the 1913 Armory Show they began buying modern art, and from 1915 to 1920 their apartment at 33 West Sixty-Seventh Street became a salon for artists and writers including Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Man Ray, Beatrice Wood, Henri-Pierre Roché, Charles Sheeler, Walter Pach, William Carlos Williams, Mina Loy, Wallace Stevens, and others. Duchamp lived in the apartment during the summer of 1915 and remained the couple's closest artistic ally. Arensberg helped organize the Society of Independent Artists and resigned with Duchamp after the rejection of *Fountain* in 1917. His poems in *The Blind Man*, Picabia's 391, and Man Ray's *TNT* belong to this collaborative Dada environment; "Vacuum Tires," praised by Duchamp from Buenos Aires as one of the few things worth reading, was Arensberg's last known published poem.

After poetry, Arensberg redirected his wordplay into cryptographic interpretation. *The Cryptography of Dante* (1921), *The Cryptography of Shakespeare* (1922), *The Secret Grave of Francis Bacon and His Mother in the Lichfield Chapter House* (1923), and later Baconian studies claimed that acrostics, anagrams, numerical structures, and typographic patterns disclosed concealed authorship and history. The methods were rejected by professional cryptanalysts, but they continued the same fascination with letters as manipulable objects visible in his Dada poems. In 1937 Walter and Louise founded the Francis Bacon Foundation in Los Angeles to support research in history, philosophy, science, literature, and art. Its library eventually passed to the Huntington Library as the Francis Bacon Foundation Arensberg Collection.

The Arensbergs moved to Southern California in 1921 for health and financial reasons, initially expecting a temporary stay. Except for a year in New York in 1925–26, they remained in Los Angeles. They first occupied a guest house on Aline Barnsdall's Olive Hill and in 1927 bought 7065 Hillside Avenue in Hollywood. There they arranged modern European paintings, sculpture, pre-Columbian objects, and rare books in dense visual constellations; Richard Neutra later added a room for Constantin Brâncuși's *Bird in Space*. The house became an informal museum and an education for Southern California artists and curators, notably the young Walter Hopps. Max Ernst and Dorothea

Tanning were married there in 1946 in a double wedding with Man Ray and Juliet Browner. Arensberg served the Los Angeles Art Association, the Los Angeles County Museum, the Southwest Museum, American Arts in Action, and the Modern Institute of Art in Beverly Hills.

The couple sought for years to keep their collection in California. A 1944 agreement with UCLA failed when the university did not construct the required museum, and Los Angeles County Museum officials had earlier declined a gift of avant-garde works. After negotiations with institutions across the United States and Mexico, the Arensbergs gave more than a thousand works and related records to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1950, creating the museum's extraordinary concentration of Duchamp and modern art. Louise died in 1953; Walter died in Los Angeles on January 29, 1954. Their papers are divided principally among the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Archives of American Art, and the Huntington. His poetry—especially the seven Dada works—now reads not as a side pursuit of a famous collector but as one of the earliest American attempts to make typography, syntax, and the printed page function as conceptual art.

Poems

Stage I | Symbolist apprenticeship and translation, 1914

The complete first book, in its original order.

Poems

To One Who Reads

What is it, that with all thy tears
Thou weep'st that loss of Guinevere's,
When she who lay with Lancelot
Lies now with Death and knows it not?
What is it that for Helen won
Away from withered Ilion
Thou weep'st when thirty centuries
Have taken her love and given peace?
What is it when on windy wings
Into thine eyes Francesca brings,
As to her Ark from Dante's book,
Dove-like, so faint, so far a look?
What is it? Ah, it is the thing,
Yea, this alone, for which did sing
The poet who for Beatrice
In death could do no more than this:
To make thee weep and so let live
The spirits who are fugitive
From the old life eternally
A while within the heart of thee.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 1–2.

In Memory of F. C. G.

Eager and unaware
Of the obscure descent,
Singing a song he went
Down the long lonely stair

That builds upon the sands
Whence no man's eyes divine
The void of the sea-line
Broken by other lands.

The songs he used to sing,
First heard them he alone
As some sad undertone
Of daylight darkening,

As some unquiet breath
Of life that swept among
The fragile rushes sprung
In sudden waves of death.

Passionate little tunes,
That bore on changing streams
The sailing of his dreams,
Under the suns and moons

Of all his human moods,
Still in your silver flow
His visions come and go,
And his brief passion broods.

So soon his years went by,
He sang, and ceased to sing,
The while his years were spring
He had no time to die—

No time upon the quest
Of all the fervor furled
In the unopened world,
No time, no time for rest.

He sought the shapes of sense
As seeks the worshipper

Mystically the myrrh
And holy frankincense,

For forms that wing the air
Toward the diviner things,
And lift upon their wings
A voice of burning prayer.

Wherefore a long regret,
However he be blest
In the far fields of rest,
Will hunt and haunt him yet,

His mutilated day,
And the malign caprice
That bade his being cease
Midway upon the way,

Ere in one wide control
Of mood and intellect
He well might reërect
His world a perfect whole,

Ere in the crucible
Of passion he might fuse,
Pure for his spirit's use,
The world that he loved well.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 3–5.

A Vow

All the night till day be born
Like a flower upon a thorn,
Like a moon upon a lake,
Like the eyes that you awake,
I will watch for your sweet sake!

All the day till night shall rise
Like a blindness on the skies,
Like the ice upon the brook.
Like a death in some sad book.
Like Leander's drowning look,

I will hide you in a hollow
Where the years alone may follow;
In the heart of such a land
That the seas shall have to stand
At the circle of its strand;

In the inner heart of me
I will keep you utterly;
Kinder than the love of brothers,
Kinder, crueller than a mother's,
In a love that brooks no others!

There shall need no other face
For the flowering of that place,
There shall need no other glass
For the sands of time to pass,
There shall be but one Alas,—

Be it only that you stay
All the night and all the day,
Be it only that you cling
Closer till you lift a wing
For the final fluttering.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 6–7.

To Little M. A. on Her Birthday

Baby born
On a morn,

With a weeping
And a sleeping

First you tested
Life, and rested.

So the trial
Broke the vial

Where the years
Keep their tears!

And you learn
Where to turn—

Life is best
On a breast!

Just the blossom
Of a bosom,

Just the mouth
Of a drouth,

Just the I
Of a cry.

Little baby,
Not a May-be

Or a Never
In Forever

Lights your way
From to-day!

Not a suture
Knits the future

To a past
All unglased

In the skies

Of your eyes!
Thoughtless brow,
Is the Now,
Is the Real
Your Ideal—
Just to be
Momently?
Or have you
Something new
Still to fashion
Out of passion?
From a mother's
To another's
Bosom laid,
Unafraid,
Will you give
Leave to live,
Ere you go—
From the throe
Out of breath—
Back to death?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 8–11.

Jardin du Luxembourg

Winter wind in autumn blows;
Autumn days are grown too chilly
For Godivas of the rose
Or the raiment of the lily.

Rouged—and not so very well—
Come the dahlias now to harden
All the soft and true pastel
Of the once ungathered garden.

Even the nursery maids have flown
From the hurricane that drenches
Gods and goddesses in stone
And the God-forsaken benches.

Like cocottes along the grass,
Dauntlessly the dahlias hearken
For the steps that never pass
While the hours of daytime darken.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 12.

Avenue de l'Opéra

Watch her experimental bluff
Of letting drop her ermine muff—
Chemically, because she waits
For masculine precipitates;
Incredulous and credulous
That she should get the drop on us,
Apologetic for the ruse,
As though she might be thought to use
A trick too easy to be fair,
Like magic or a mere Lord's Prayer!
But really, now, she is too sweet
To flower upon the trodden street,
Too full of honey and too frail
To flaunt at the deflowering male,
Too full of faith in what her sense
Knows better than experience,
Yes, too cocksure, and still too chaste
To dream of any aftertaste
Of apples that are grown for food,
Of fruit God grew and saw was good.
She lacks, I think, the brains to be
Accomplice of her Destiny;
And if she has the luck to find
A fellow who is not unkind,
She'll have a laugh. . . so never mind!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 13–14.

On the Train

O glad release into the sea-deep night!
O swift and sure extinction of the light
Of Paris waning to a starry dust
Of lamps that lubricate its life and lust,
Of lamps that look at what the walls exhume
Of the still starved cadavers of a tomb
That grudges even the grace unto its dead
To let them rot without the need of bread!

The light is out. O sad, O hopeless flight
Into the dim, illimitable night,
Into the shadowy hollow of the world!
Fatally and impenetrably furled
In Paris and the Past, the flowers of days
Are now all trodden on those darkened ways,
The flowers that once were scattered in the street
To pave it, ah, for what escaped feet!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 15.

The Moons of All Time

Where are the moons that in all olden night
Have bloomed along the shoreland of the sky,
Stately as lilies, single, still, and white,
Unhastening to open and to die?

Where are the moons upon what aimless flight,
That from their garden while the wind is high
Another breaks and bubbles toward the height,
Blown loose among the stars that wander by?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 16.

A Fountain at Frascati

The drooping of the fountain to its pool,
A silver willow weeping in the night,
Is like a wraith that haunts for lost delight
The mirror that it once made beautiful.

I hear the dropping moments in the spray. . .
The stealthy hours desert the solitude,
Wherein is waiting, waiting to be wooed,
The wraith of hushed love that passed away.

First published in Poems. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 17.

Serenade

Be still, be still—you have dreamed awhile.
The moon and the stars are not for you,
And on the face is not the smile
That you are whispering to.

The world is waiting at your eyes.
You sleep too long, awake, awake!
You have been happy—now be wise,
And watch the bubbles break!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 18.

Night

From utter dark to utter
Dark on the wing,
The stars are all a-flutter
With westering!

What wakens out of heaven,
What farther peace,
Arcturus and the seven
Pale Pleiades?

And slips the moon her mooring
From out the bay. . .
What in the world is luring
The moon away?

Horizon past horizon,
Is there a quest?
What is the road it lies on,
West beyond west?
Hollow above the hollow
Of star-far dome,
What way is there to follow
Home?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 19–20.

Among the Fields

Ere the day darken, dear,
Ere the day die,
Bow down and hearken, dear,
Out of the sky.

Lonely I wander, dear,
Under the sun.
Wilt thou be yonder, dear,
When days are done?

Out of the grave of thee
Up through His portal,
What did God save of thee
For the immortal?

What hath He made of thee,
More to be blest?
What of the braid of thee,
What of the breast?

Oh, when I come to thee
With the old word,
Will it be dumb to thee
Then, or be heard?

Thou who did'st evenly
Share in the old,
Will it be heavenly
Then to withhold?

Spirit who bore to me
Love of a woman,
Be as of yore to me
Heavenly human!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 21–22.

To a Skylark in the Campagna

Thou art so far,
Bird of the singing wings
Or singing star,
That by thy lightnings

Of song alone
I trace thy sunny track
To the Unknown,
And I would call thee back!

Come unto me,
And I will build a nest
Of memory.
And I will give thee rest.

Yea, though thou roam
Deathward with all the world,
My heart's a home
Where wings will not be furled,
A home my heart
Where memory shall shrine
The deathless part
Of this mad flight of thine!

But from my call
To thee who art so far.
Bird that let'st fall
Star after falling star

Of voice afire,
Still on the flight begun
Thou mountest higher,
Up to the endless sun!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 23–24.

A Poppy

Flame of the swooned heat
Of sun-blazed air,
Now burning in her wheat
Of golden hair,

O poppy with thy fruit
Of dream and doom,
Plucked for thy passionate mute
Appeal of bloom,

Has she the power to reckon
Toward what wild ways
She lifted thee to beckon
Above her face?

Or is it for the red
Of just a flower
She crowns upon her head
Seductive power?
Out of her virgin trance
Thy blood-red call
And languid petulance
Are bacchanal!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 25–26.

Eclogue

Within the woodland secrecies
Of languorous glades that meekly lie
Released from the embracing trees,
Uncovered underneath the sky,

While I was all alone and heard,
Faint as an echo when it dies,
The melancholy cuckoo bird
Keep calling for her own replies,

In dream I saw Neaera there,
Lying asleep among the grapes,
Her face deep nested in her hair. . .
And all the while a satyr gapes!

With eyes that are too timid sad
And open lips that meditate
The pastures of her breast unclad,
He hears his heart—until, too late!
She has drained out her summer sleep,
Her sunshine languor melts away,
And ere her eyes dream-heavy peep,
He loses all his heart to stay!

But oftener in other mood
I wander to the wood alone,
And in a chosen solitude
Unto myself I make my moan

Of dreams that never come to flower,
And of those flowers that are forlorn,
Like morning-glories, in the hour
That takes away the hour of morn.

Oh then when I have wept apart
The flowers of dream so nearly dead,
I am enlightened in my heart
And delicately comforted,

And see that the unhuman tryst
There with the living solitude
Is sweeter than Neaera kissed
Within the secret of the wood.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 27–28.

Expectancy

Dream, drudge, and then the years to wait
My heart is listening at its gate
Forever for the feet of Fate.

And while the seasons cloud and clear,
“Is Fate far off, or is Fate near,
Or passed?” I ask—I cannot hear;

Until my heart reads in the Laws:
“In the beginning as it was,
So shall it be without a pause!”

Until my heart in secret says:
“Along the drifting level ways
Of Time there are no different days!”

For lo! without a trumpet blast,
The mute dead march of Fate at last
Is coming still and long is passed.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 29.

A Ballade to My Lady Moonlight

I know not how thou cam'st to rise,
Moon of my nights, and waken me
From slumber that was death's disguise—
No power on earth could set me free.
Ah, but the power was heavenly,
The power of love in thee enshrined—
Or if it is a lunacy,
Beloved, do not call me blind!

There was no word of dim moonrise,
No early flush of birth to be
Along the east. I closed my eyes
On skies as dark as the dark sea.
The darkness was a mystery
Wherethrough there was no way to wind,
Till with thy light thou mad'st me see.
Beloved, do not call me blind!

Moon of my nights, on sapphire skies
No morning star gives light like thee,
Nor comes to birth in blossom-wise
Out of the east on mere or lea
So like a lily perfectly.
The stars before thee and behind,
When thou art shining, fade and flee.
Beloved, do not call me blind!

Listen, my Moonlight, to my plea!
Because I have not half defined
Thy beauties in these stanzas three,
Beloved, do not call me blind!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 30–31.

Until To-Morrow

Until to-morrow or some other day,
To-morrow's morrow far and far away,
I wander with bewildered heart and feet,
Lost on the hills of separation, sweet.

Beyond the hills of separation, sweet,
Your arms will hold me when at last we meet. . .
And will you whisper, then, that I may stay
Until to-morrow or some other day?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 32.

Romanticism

I watched the window of the world.
Which is myself inevitably,
How through the window was unfurled
The midnight that had darkened me.

And as the bursting buds emerge
And odorous flames of flowers are born,
I followed on the fainting verge
The slow emergency of morn.

Wherefore, because all curious things,
The warmth of flowers, the flower of flame,
The momentariness of wings
Weaving together the ways they came,

The breath of lilies on still air
That toll like censers full of myrrh,
The weaving of a woman's hair,
Which breathes the frankincense of her,
Because all curious things impress
Me only through the sense of me,
I strove to make for loveliness
A sensitive transparency;

Till all the labor on the glass
Brought a reflection dimly known,
And mingled with the shapes that pass
I see the eyes that are mine own—

Till ever in the carelessness
Of the untroubled world I see
The image of mine own distress,
The mute mirage of sympathy,

As though the living wine of pain
Should stir again its stagnant lees,
And with a human sorrow stain
The Hermes of Praxiteles.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 33–34.

A Prayer

Pour down the darkness of your hair
As a veil falls over the evening skies.
I hear the voice of an old despair
Calling, calling out of the past,
And there's an echo that replies.
Pour down the darkness of your hair
And make a mist about my eyes;
—For what is there to say at last?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 35.

Dream-Tryst

Come to me not in dream,
For fear of the awaking!
What is the good to seem,
To keep my heart from breaking?

Come to me not to-night,
O dream without a morrow!
You come and you take flight
When you have borne my sorrow.

Come to me not at all!
Then is the world a hollow.
You do not come—you call.
You do not come—I follow!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 36.

Above the Sea

The hill is high in heaven,
And here in the control
Of vision shall be given
The seas that shall unroll
Till seas on skies are driven,—

Till through the seas asunder
Is the abysm cracked;
And there the days go under,
And there the cataract
Of Ocean throws its thunder.

And while the westward rivers
Are winding to the sea,
The dying day delivers
Its ghost, which seems to be
The dusk that cries and quivers.
Now is the saddest hour
Of hours that still are sweet.
Oh for my heart the power,
The ways oh for my feet,
To find its fatal flower!

Though love grow even fonder
Than love that lures and clings,
Oh that I still may wander
Home to the tears of things,
And know the trouble yonder!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 37–38.

Night Song

Ah, love, it is all so dark in me
That I fear and I feel alone,
Like one who wanders along the sea
And hears the surges moan;
When the moonless sea is a mystery
He fears and he feels alone.

Ah, love, will you look in the dark of me
As though you understood
The sea and the alien shore of the sea
And the dark unentered wood?
Your eyes in a moonless mystery
Make heavenly neighborhood!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 39.

Interior

Oh to enclose thee, sweet,
A lily in the room,
Wherein a chosen gloom
Shuts out in dim defeat

The gold and crimson blent
In the ecstatic songs
Shrilled by the sunny throng
Of flowers too violent!

The fervent flute of June
Deliriously blows
The crimson of the rose
And the high note of noon.

The windows have a veil
That lets the summer fall
More mutely musical
Upon the cold and pale
Hush of the mastered keys
Whereo'er thy fingers furl,
O instrumental girl
For human melodies!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 40–41.

The Return

I lay me under quiet skies to sleep
And cease remembering the days that keep
My heart awake with murmuring their old tales,
Murmuring like a wind against the sails
That seek the sea and are blown always home.
Haply, I said, these memories may roam
At last and all go sailing down the sea,
If for an hour of sleep I cease to be.
But there were voices in the open sky
Singing so far away they seemed to die,
The voice of distance and a singing cloud
Too far above the tree-tops to be loud;
And still they sang and kept my heart awake
Because of their untroubled beauty's sake.
So it grew sweet to listen to old stories,
And view around the sterile promontories
The dreams that were too weak to cross the sea
Drift back to their old haven helplessly.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 42.

Venus of Melos

Lo, I was weary, and I have rest in thee,
For over the fawns of thine unhidden breast
And solemn urgency of their long gaze,
The veil and far seclusion of thy face
Has fallen like a silence blessedly,
And hushed their hunger and eternal quest.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 43.

Autumn Wind

The birds drift over the autumnal sky
Like frail and fallen leaves across a lawn.
And the unmitigating winds have drawn
Out of their chant a shivering shaken cry.

The winds have wrecked the gleaming sails of day
And they have made a sorrow of the air—
Wild winds, that are as streaming as the hair
Of girls that wait the drowned by the bay.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 44.

Quest

What was it that I shall not seek again,
Vainly, in your pure eyes sought not in vain?

What was it, all the unsure summer through,
I feverishly hoped to find in you?

And what, when in a new, pathetic wise,
You left ajar the gateway of your eyes,

And at the last endured that I should look
Into your eyes and read as in a book,

Unveiling in a tremulous distress
The candor of your spirit's nakedness,

What was it in your eyes that let me read
Merely a woman's need of a man's need?
Why did your own desiring make you seem
No more the strange, strange woman of my dream

Ah! what old disillusion turned to strike
And show that you were human-sisterlike?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 45–46.

Confidences

Listening woman, conjuring,
Out of the shadows of my heart,
Out of the shelter of the wing
Of shame itself that broods apart,

The words that are as wounds, the dreams
That are so quiet, being dead,
What is this wistfulness that gleams
When you have heard and I have said?

Because I looked upon your smile,
I held my heart out in a word.
Your smile grew sad a little while. . .
Alas, I dreamed that you had heard!

And you, when you have listened so,
And know the shrine that you may be,
Where praying men may come and go,
You weep, and almost feel for me.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 47.

My Lady's Tomb

My lady in the darkened house
Where all the dead go home to drowse
Awoke, and could not understand
The flowers that faded in her hand.

My lady in the lonely bed
Where she had never thought to wed
Knew Death, and while her eyelids kept
The look of sleep, she wept and wept.

Above her eyes, a fountain sealed,
With lips all thirsty Death hath kneeled,
And he hath drunk from the dim pool
That made her sorrows beautiful.

And in the waning garden close
Where many a lily and one red rose
Were all the life that she would reap,
Death like a lover falls asleep.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 48.

Weariness

I am weary already of the years that are yet to be,
The sad and stale prepared procession of years
That flag with desperate hopes and a fever of fears
The straight descent and the single certainty.

I fear the invasion of days that, one by one,
Stealthily over the wall of the leaguered night,
Invade the city of sleep with a lance of light
And a flood of flame and the torch of a surging sun.

And when the flame and the flood pass over me,
I shall feel too tired for the waking after death.
I had rather sleep than draw the long, long breath
Of the tired insomnia of eternity.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 49.

For a Picture by Leonardo da Vinci

Mary the virgin mother—see!—
Still like a child upon the knee
Of Anne as virginal as she,

The mother like a sister grown
To her who of herself alone
Covered a god with flesh and bone.

Veiled in a smile that is not mirth,
They dream of the vain virgin birth
That is a miracle on earth.

The smile of their secretive eyes
Is with a subtle shame grown wise,
The holy shame of Mysteries.

And on their maiden mouths their smile
Hides them as Eve hid, in the guile
Of women who have loved awhile.
Though grace of God has lighted there
The hidden haloes of their hair,
And though they tend with wistful care

The Son of God and still their own,
They are as slaves whose dreams have flown
From where they wait about the throne,

As vestal slaves who dream again,
In lands where they are alien,
Of olden home and hearts of men.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 50–51.

Slumber Song

We are alone and guarded deep
Among the silences of sleep,
And morning muses still so far,
It has not dimmed the morning star.
Sleep and be happy, do not moan—
We are alone.

Sleep and be happy, do not break
The twilight with your eyes awake!
Oh sleep, oh sleep, the dreadful day
Is still so many hours away;
And when you are awake you seem
To lose a dream.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 52.

Chryseis

When came the priest thy father to recapture
Thee, O thou sad and glad Chryseis, won
And worn by Agamemnon and undone,
What of thy rape and thine unwilling rapture

Didst thou remember, pure and simple daughter,
Seeing thy father with a golden treasure
Still fail to free thee from the deadly pleasure
And sail without thee home across the water?

Wert thou so lonely then that thou didst crave
Oh any touch to make thee less alone,
Till, when the Grecian hand unclasped thy zone,
Almost did'st thou forget to be a slave?

And when thy father's god with myriad slaughter
Ransomed thee at the last as if with gold,
And Agamemnon's fingers loosed their hold
Among thy tresses, O thou ravished daughter,
And when the Grecians sailed thee home again,
Threading the islands toward thy native cape,
No more a simple maid! what of thy rape
And thine unwilling helpless rapture then

Didst thou remember, leaning on the mast
That dipt into the winds like a god's oar?
Didst thou gaze backward toward the Trojan shore,
Willing a little at the very last?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 53–54.

The Wild Rose

Deep in the meadow where the roses hive
Their joy of June I went to be made glad.
They were not human but they were alive,
And they were all the living that I had.

The joyous roses in the meadow twine
And of themselves they give abundantly.
I plucked a rose, but it would not be mine,
I breathed it, but I could not make it me.

I tore the garment of my rose apart.
Alas, when all the petals had been shed,
Still made my rose a secret of its heart,
And I have left it on the meadow dead.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 55.

During Music

Slow with old pain
Awake again,
Her eyelids cling
In opening
Without surprise
Pain-patient eyes.
Her memory
How like the sea,
Whereunder, low,
The afterglow
Of day and night
Sinks out of sight!
Ah, she knows not
Her own dim thought.
Nor of her passion
Its first fierce fashion.
Nor of the past
Knows now at last
The dawn above
The flight of love.
All things that were
Are dim to her,
The dead days rise
With vacant eyes,
So swift, so aching
The woe awaking
Wakens to swoon
At this old tune.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 56–57.

Seaward

I know there is another strand
Down where the sky is low as land,
Out of whose dimness cometh soon
The lowly rising of the moon.
And her impassive bar of light
Across the waters in the night
Hath power to hold the surges under,
When they rise up in foam and thunder.
And when the moon is taken away,
There is no light till early day,
And nothing on the sea can hold
The strength of waters mountain-rolled,
No light along the hidden sea
Husheth the waves continually.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 58.

Nocturne

Stars in the silent boughs
Wake while the robins drowse.

After so long a winging
What starts them now to singing?

Of course it is a love,
Which they are dreaming of.

But song and stars and dreams
Are lovelier than love seems.

Dreams and the stars and song!
Oh why does the world go wrong?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 59.

The Grave

I wonder if she grieves in her dark grave
Because she may not look through closed eyes
When the mild moth wings of the morning wave
And swarm the tranquil emptiness of skies?

I wonder if regret for the green earth
Wakens her heart and tells her timid feet
To grope back homeward through the gates of birth
Where there's a sun to make the shadow sweet?

Once on her grave the flowers were springing up,
And they were bursting with the need to live;
And every flower had raised an empty cup
Under the April sun, and sang: "O give!"

And now they lift unto a sunless cloud
Their cups still empty, and they still cry: "Give!"
And so may she be crying in her shroud,
And so may she have still the need to live.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 60.

Sonnets

Time's Losses I

Egyptian sands are restless like the sea!
With winds of all the ages, wave on wave,
Up heaven's stairs, the Pyramid, they rave. . .
They drown that rival of eternity!
And Cleopatra beckoned Anthony
To show her with a kiss if he were brave
Five fathom underneath the climbing grave
That riddles to the Sphinx unanswerably.

Holier ashes in the sands are drowned
Than Cleopatra's, fair but fainter fames
Of queens that were no more than blooms of sound,
The "Tragedies" of Alexandria's flames.
In ashes are they dead? Go tell the Sphinx
That they in God are living when God thinks!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 61.

Time's Losses II

The golden pillars of the Parthenon
Are all discrowned of the Pheidian frieze;
Statues of gods within the waves off Greece
The Romans drowned, and then they voyaged on.
Chryselephantine phantom of the dawn,
Such is Athena now that no man sees;
And never in Melos more may Venus ease
With her lost lovely arms her lovers gone.

Earth the eternal lies upon the tomb
Of men who made of her so great a mother.
She waits. . . of men alive she waits what other
To make her spirit from her body bloom,
Her maiden majesty and act of love,
And the still unconceived dreams thereof?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 62.

On a Macedonian Tomb

So soon, behold, they tired of this their House,
Man and his woman even one in death,
Which from the love of life left out of breath
Their souls explored and makes it hard to rouse.
They have released themselves and dare not drowse,
Mistrustful, though the stealthy silence saith:
“Unto the dead no new thing followeth,
So slumber on beneath the cypress boughs.”

Yea, they have risen now and plumb the deep
Of the god-haunted spaces of the skies,
Nor trust the sad security of sleep,
Nor rest the ageless watching of their eyes,
Lest the abortion of the future leap
Quick on them with the terror of surprise.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 63.

The End of the Story

Sadly at midnight in the little room
I close the book, and on the window pane
I lean my forehead, till I hear again
Time—that is disenchanted now—resume
Its death-watch like a sentry in the gloom;
And in my soul I hear the Grecian main
Ebbing its music from a tidal plain
That now becomes a waste without one bloom.

I close the book, and from imagined flight
I sink into myself. Good night, good night,
If night were not so long! See how the moon
Is lagging in the arms of yonder tree!
The night is stagnant! Ah, but see how soon
Out of those arms the moon is rising free!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 64.

At Parting

Hush and give over: have no other thought
Than to be silent now! Ah, cease to urge
Her to return; for on the sunset verge
Of her own lone horizon she has caught
The wings of her own spirit sought and sought.
Call her no more; lest, if she should emerge
Shoreward a moment, she should feel the surge
Breaking again upon the life forgot.

I would, instead, that I might go with her!
Yea, this instead, because she is so young
And may be troubled when the shadows stir
And have no knowledge of her way among
The nights that must be lonelier than they were,
When to my hand she tremulously clung.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 65.

The Sleeping Beauty

She sleeps. . . and shall she yet awake? She lies
So very quiet on her narrow bed.
The lace about her throat, the lilies spread
Upon her bosom neither fall nor rise,
Nor pale beneath the pallor of the skies
Veiled by the darkened windows; candles shed
The light that only falls about the dead.
When they are burned what dawn shall touch her eyes

Princess of Slumber for a Hundred Years,
Before you fell asleep you dried your tears,
Hearing a Prince should come for your awaking,
And gladly closed your eyes to wait for him!
So if he leave your eyes forever dim,
Grieve not—you shall not know your old mistaking!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 66.

“Music to Hear”

A little longer let thy fingers fall
Upon the keys. Oh cease, oh cease not yet!
But still, oh very gently, touch and fret
The sleep of an enchanted madrigal!
Fret and awake, call and caress and call,
And give not over calling, weep and wet
Thy song with all thy tears, till it forget
The silence that shall be the end of all.

Give over now at last, and let it be!
Waken no song that sleeps. Touch not a key,
But let thine hands in mine be quiet. Lo!
Above that halcyon brooding on the seas
Which was thy voice, the tidal silences
Float with the drowned life of long ago!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 67.

For a Picture of a Saint

She was a girl who waited on the Lord,
And years becalmed were hers that she might pray,
For He had pleasure in the simple way
She spake, and when before the Throne she poured
The patience of her gaze she made accord
With all the viols that in Heaven play,
And from the hymn on high the Will would stray
Earthward to her for some enchanted word.

Fountains were like the service of her thought,
And on her soul, forsooth, her senses fell
Like April rains at night that waken not.
But if she ever loved I cannot tell,
Or if the soul that has to Heaven been caught
Had dared to tarry with a soul in Hell.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 68.

To One Whose Love Was Service

She never would have had a parting grieve
The two or three who gathered in her name,
Nor for the spent self-sacrificial flame
Of all her days spared she at all to sheave
The tired late hours left in the field at eve,
The hours ungleaned, but offered still the same
That presence unto which our prayers made
claim. . .
And so we dreamed that she would not take leave.

But on a night that was without a moon
Or even a star to light her long last way,
She moved her lips that we might come and kneel
Beside her; and we know not then how soon
She laid her lips upon us for her seal;
But when we rose it was another day.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 69.

A Face

Susceptible as silence to a song,
Or lakes to winds, or night to slow sunrise,
Or dreamers sleeping where the moonlight lies
On meadows, to the moon's evasions long,
These are the eyes the days departed throng
With memories like clouds upon the skies,
Till out of weariness remembrance dies,
And hope, and nothing now is right or wrong.

Yet as the weary may outsleep the dawn
And waken in the doubtful evening light,
Thinking it still is dawn and not the night,
So she would think,—if only Love would tell!—
That still her golden hours have not all gone
The shadowy way that leads from Heaven to Hell.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 70.

The Pietà of Michel Angelo

Look now how broken and how spent he lies,
Even like an arrow shattered in a tree,
Or like a messenger of victory
Who to his home so races that he dies.
In death dead-tired, he seems to agonise
Now for the rest he takes upon the knee
Of her who knows how restful death must be,
Bowing with pitilessly peaceful eyes.

He knew the virtue had gone out of him,
Once, in the years accomplished, to console
A sickened woman; now from every limb
The crucified extortion of his soul
Drains until limbs are shrunk and eyes are dim
Virtue enough to make a sick world whole.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 71.

Atalanta

I think that Atalanta turned her face
Backward along the course and saw the man,
Desperately defeated as he ran,
Throw down a golden apple upon a place
Where she must pass again and win the race.
She scanned his eyes—what care had she to scan
The shame of gold that was to break her ban
Of girlhood?—and she faltered in her pace.

Oh then she feared the fear to be a bride,
And feared the wind that had laid bare her thigh;
She burned to blushes, but she paused and bowed
Above the apple till he passed her by;
She hid her burning in his dusty cloud
And heard the trailing laughter of his pride!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 72.

In the Home of Life

As though to-morrow were the mortal morn,
The unpermitted portal in the hall
Where I have turned the golden keys of all
Those other portals wide and overworn
With passionate quest and hope not all forlorn,
Death seems so near to me that I might call
And by mine own intrusion disenthral
The secret that he keeps behind his bourne.

Scarce would I say God grant, for God grants death;
Yet granting death to me in time to come,
God grant my spirit be not wholly numb,
Nor so distracted by a strangling breath
That then should be eclipsed by the pain
The love that after all was all life's gain.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 73.

When I Am Old

When I am old and weary of the world.
And ready for the solitary change
That after all adventure shall be strange—
When after revolutions that have hurled
The crowns of noon into the ocean swirled
Round my Helena and its haunted grange
I shall beside the window sit and range
Lost kingdoms with a dream of banners furled.

Be with me then. . . or if you have to be
Upon your errand to Eternity,
Oh keep not hidden in the skyey blue;
But turn at every star, half lingeringly.
And drop a quiet flower of memory,
That I may know the way to follow you.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 74.

The Nightingales

Still in Boccaccio's book the nightingales.
As in the ancient night of Florence, cool
With stars that made the silence purposeful,
Gleam in the silence with the starry tales
Boccaccio told of lust that wore love's veils.
Pure songs, they charm the claws of Time that pull
Love's veils away and show the withered skull
Hidden where the face flushes not now nor pales.

Oh for what face outlived that once was hers,
Hers who is living now and here asleep,
Call ye among the dead, proud wakeners?
Oh call no more, or she will wake and weep!
She wanders now by broken sepulchres,
She has an other tryst than mine to keep.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 75.

Quatrains

The Poet

Just listen to the poet's dream—
Of life he wants to live the whole!
So starving, that to feed his soul,
Poor fellow, he must make things seem!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 76.

The Masterpiece

I think ere any early poet awed
Men with a haunted image of Mankind,
They buried in a grave gone out of mind
The supreme poet who imagined God.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 77.

Youth

I am as one born blind. God, let me see!
Thou hast enchanted me in a strange land,
So sweet, that I forget the mystery
Of thine unseen, insinuating Hand.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 78.

Time in a Garden

The daffodils have held one golden day
For seven days and nights; their day is done.
Their requiem, 'tis the iris misty and gray,
Which holds the hour of twilight in the sun.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 79.

The Rhone at Avignon

Under the towers the currents of the Rhone
Endure the deep division of an isle,
Proud from the first embrace to wait alone
Their marriage through the seaward Afterwhile.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 80.

On a Certain Irregularity

Put out the World—I want to sleep awhile!
I know about her beauties very well.
When I am tired of her Platonic smile.
She breaks the Law to work a Miracle!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 81.

To a Deserted Litter of Puppies

New-born, and so precariously new,
Blind in a milkless world, and shivering,
The very puppies for a moment knew
That the life-effort is the fatal thing.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 82.

To a Goaded Sheep

If it had known the journey's end, the dunce,
Limping along, the mimic of its pain,
It might have known there was n't much to gain
It might have rested, and been killed at once.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 83.

A Franciscan

His tonsure like a branded aureole,
His naked feet, the rope that round him ties
The sack that cloisters him—can these control
The truant dreaming of his prisoned eyes?

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 84.

Tribute

Some few, within a still, religious haunt,
Pay unto God the tribute of their praise;
But others have to pay in other ways—
They suffer, God, if that is what you want.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 85.

Out of Doors

I hear the wings, the winds, the river pass,
And toss the fretful book upon the grass.
Poor book, it could not cure my soul of aught
It has itself the old disease of thought.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 86.

About an Allegory

It was the earth that Dante trod
When he trod Hell, it was the earth,
Itself sufficient for the hearth
That warms the hands of a cold God.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 87.

Tristan and Iseult of the White Hands

A Fragment

Tristan

Boy, art thou waking?

Iseult

Nay, he sleeps, but I
Have wakened all night through, dear lord.

Tristan

What news?

Iseult

The dawn hath broke the east. There hath no more
Than dawn and gradual stars come over-sea,
And the long moon since last I gave thee word.

Tristan

Then will I watch by day as thou by night,
Till that lone ship shall follow stars and moon
Up to the empty circle of the heavens,
And rise on wings of white and bring my love,
Or rise on raven wings and bring her not,
And tell me with its wings to live or die.
Lift me a little in my bed, Iseult,
Lift me, and let me look upon the light.

Iseult

Yea, Tristan, rest thine eyes upon the sky
And the untroubled presence of the sea,
And rest upon my breast thy fallen head.

Tristan

Thine arms are all about me as of old.
Where have we fallen apart, Iseult, that thus
Thine arms are all about me as of old
And thy loose hair entangles me, and still
I am as far from thee as hell from heaven?

Iseult

Ask me not that, nor ask it of thyself,
Lest thou shouldst understand too well at last
How flowers of loveliness may fade for love.
Perchance I waked for thee too long, and faded!

Tristan

Wert thou awake indeed?

Iseult

Yea, lord, indeed.

Tristan

Would I had called thee then. I lay alone,
Walled in by midnight darkness, and the waves
Rolled out their rhythms on the empty sands
And set the chambers murmuring like a shell.
Then was I haunted by a ghost of fear. . .
The seas are very perilous by night,
And love is little when the seas are wide:
Perchance Iseult of Cornwall will not come!
I might have called thee when I trembled then,
And felt thee throbbing by me, breath by breath,
A living creature in that deadly darkness.

Iseult

The midnight darkness walled us in together,
The surges rolled their rhythms on the shore,
The chambers murmured dumbly like a shell,
And I was haunted by a ghost like thine.
I have no gift of comfort any more
To bring thee quiet breathing in the night,
For all my magic is nothing more than love,
And all my love is turned from me aside
While from my breast thou gazest to the sea.

Tristan

My wound is master of my words, Iseult.
I am too weary with my wound to say
How I love not, how love, how now my life

Lingers a little only till my love
From all her sailing sinks her anchor here.
Thee have I loved indeed. So for that love,
So for that love that I have not remembered,
Oh help me live until the sails come home!
Be not afraid, I should not leave thee then,
Not though a friend had need and called, not though
Another love than thine were calling at last
Should I arise and leave for love or battle.
But all my heart hath only this desire,
That the warm woman flower of overseas
Iseult of Cornwall hear my call and come,
Crossing the seas, and hide me in her hair,
And hold me in her fragrance till I die.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 88–94.

Translations

Sonnet

From Ronsard

I want to read the Iliad in three days,
So, Corydon, turn tight the lock on me.
If any one disturbs me, verily,
Thou shalt find out how much mine anger weighs.

I only want to come and make my bed
Our chambermaid, thy mate, and never thee;
I want to live three days in privacy,
Then to make merry for a week ahead.

But should somebody from Cassandra come,
Open the door and let him enter straight,
Hurry into my room, and help me dress.

For him alone I want to be at home.
Otherwise, though a god for me express
From heaven, shut the door and let him wait.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 95.

Sonnet

From Du Bellay

Happy is he who like Ulysses travels far,
Or like the one who made the conquest of the Fleece,
And then returns, laden with lore and memories,
To pass the remnant of his life where kindred are!

Alas, when shall I see again the smoke upglide
Above my little town, and in what time of year
See once again the garden of my home austere,
Which is for me a province, and so much beside?

Pleases me more the mansion that my fathers knew
Than the facades of Roman courts spectacular:
Pleases me more than mighty marble the slate fine,
Than the Italian Tiber more the Gallic Loire,
And more my little Lyre than Mount Palatine,
And more than ocean wind the softness of Anjou.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 96.

Upon a Dead Woman

From De Musset

Beautiful was she, if the Night
Which sleeps where Michel Angelo
Has made her bed the shrine twilight,
Without a motion may be so.

She was a saint, if't is enough,
Passing, to give with open palms,
So God sees not nor speaks thereof;
If, without pity, gold makes alms.

Thoughtful she was, if the vain tone
Of a sweet voice and subtly wrought,
Just like a stream that maketh moan,
May make one have belief in thought.

She prayed, if two resplendent eyes,
Upon the earth a moment staying,
A moment lifted to the skies,
May properly be called a praying.
She would have smiled, if ever a flower
That is not in full blossom yet
Could be burst open by the power
Of winds that pass it and forget.

She would have wept, if hand of hers,
Laid on her heart in this cold way,
Could once have felt in all her years
The dew of heaven in human clay.

She would have loved, save that her pride,
Like to the lamp unserviceable
Illumined at the coffin's side,
By her hard heart stood sentinel.

She's dead, and never lived at all.
She looks as though she were not dead.
Out of her hands she has let fall
The book that she has never read.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 97–98.

Meditation

From Baudelaire

Be patient, O my Grief, and quiet down.
You call for Evening; it descends; 't is here;
An atmosphere obscure enfolds the town,
Bringing to some repose, to others fear.
Now, while the human hordes without renown,
Under the lash of Pleasure, doomsman drear,
Gather remorse in fetes of slave and clown,
My Grief, hold out your hand to me; draw near,
Afar from them. See how the Years deceased
Bow from the skies in robes of by-gone styles;
Out of the water springs Regret and smiles;
Beneath an arch is drowsed the dying sun,
And drawn like a long coffin toward the East,
Hear, love, the coming Night, the gentle one.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 99.

Complaint of Lord Pierrot

From Jules Laforgue

She that must put me wise about the Feminine!
We'll tell her firstly, with my air least impolite:
"The angles of a triangle, O sweetheart mine,
Are equal to two right."

And if this cry escape her: "God, how I love thee!"
—"God will reward his own." Or if she wince and cry:
"My keys have heart, thou shalt be all my melody!"
"All's relative," say I.

With all her eyes then, knowing that she is too trite:
"Alas, thou lov'st me not; others are jealous, too!"
And I, who with one eye at the Unconscious sight:
"Thanks, not so bad; and you?"

"Let's play that we are true!"—"O Nature, for what profit?
For each who loses someone wins!" Then lines like these:
"Thou'lt be the first to weary, I am certain of it. . . ."
—"After you, if you please."

At last if she shall die some evening, fugitive
Among my books; feigning to be incredulous,
I'll mutter: "Well now, but—we had the Means to Live!
So it was serious?"

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 100–101.

Conceits

From Jules Laforgue

Ah! the Moon, the Moon obsesses me. . .
Do you think there is a remedy?

Dead? But may she not be merely numb,
Drunken with the cosmic opium?

O rose-window with thine efflorescence
Tomb-like in the Temple of Quiescence,

Thou persistest in thine attitude,
While I stifle with my lonely mood.

Yes, oh yes, thy breast is fashioned fair;
But, if never I may suckle there? . . .

Oh, to-morrow night, and such allusion
Will go off a-laughing in confusion,
Finding in my platonism fine
Raptures of an angler at his line.

Queen of Lilies, hail! Your Majesty,
I would pierce thee with the moths of me!

I would kiss thy patine, widowed
Charger of Saint John the Baptist's head

I would find a song to touch thee so,
Thou would'st voyage to the mouth below.

But there are no other rhymes for Moon—ah,
What a most regrettable lacuna!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 102–103.

Sea Wind

From Mallarmé

The flesh is sad, alas, and all the books are read.
Flight, flight out there! The birds, I know, are ravished
To be amid the unknown foam and in the skies!
Nothing, not olden gardens mirrored in the eyes
Can hold at home this heart that plunges in the sea,
O nights, nor yet my candle's lonely clarity
On the blank page whose whiteness keeps it undefiled,
Nor the young wife who suckles at her breast her child.
I will depart. O steamer with thy masts asway,
Lift anchor now for an exotic Far-away.
An ennui, desolate with hopes that turned to griefs,
Is trusting still the last good-bye of handkerchiefs!
And it may be these masts, which to the tempests beck,
Are even of those a wind may bend above a wreck
Lost, with no masts, no masts nor isles exuberant. . .
But hearken, O my heart, unto the sailors' chant!

Note: The first line is Arthur Symons'.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 104.

What Silk in Scents

From Mallarmé

What silk in scents of centuries
Where the Chimera is subdued
Is worth the shape and native nude
That you outside your mirror ease?

The wounds of banners eloquent
Exalt along the thoroughfare:
But I—I have your naked hair
For covering my eyes content.

Ah no! the mouth may not be sure
To taste of that which makes it fond,
Till he, your princely paramour,
Extinguish, like a diamond,
In the considerable tangles
The cry of Glories that he strangles.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 105.

Musette

From Murger

Seeing a swallow yesterday
Bringing the year into its prime,
I was reminded of the fay
Who loved me when she had the time;
And even till the night drew near
In reverie I bowed above
The almanack of that old year
When she and I were so in love.

Ah, no, my youth is not dead yet,
Not dead my memory of you!
If at my door you knocked, Musette,
My heart would open and draw you through.
Because your name still makes it beat,
O Muse of infidelity,
Come back that we again may eat
The blessed bread of gaiety.

The things about our little room,
The olden friends of our amour,
Just in the hope that you may come
Put on again a gay allure.
Come, you will see them all, my lass,
Mourning because you left them there,
The little bed and the big glass,
From which you often drank my share.

You should put on your white array,
Exactly as of yore you should.
And as of yore the Sabbath day
We'd go to run about the wood;
And in a bower at evening
We'd drink again that vintage light
Wherein your song would dip a wing
Before it soared into the night.

Musette, who at the last had learned
The carnival had sunk to rest,

Upon a pleasant morn returned,
Migrating bird, to the old nest;
But even in kissing the coquette,
No longer did my heart beat high,
And she, who is no more Musette,
Said that I was no longer I.

Adieu, now go your ways, my dear.
Dead with the love that is no more;
Our youth is in its sepulchre
Beneath the almanack of yore.
'T is only now by digging through
The dust of days that in it lies
A memory may find anew
The key of the lost paradise.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 106–108.

After Three Years

From Verlaine

When I had pushed the narrow gate that hung ajar,
I made my way into the little garden close,
Whereover quietly the morning sunshine glows,
Jeweling every blossom with a watery star.

Nothing has changed. I see it all: the unpretending
Bower with the vine grown wild and wicker chairs around.
Always the jet of water makes its silver sound,
And the old aspen tree its threnody unending.

The roses as of yore are throbbing; as of yore
The great proud lilies in the breeze are bending o'er.
I recollect each lark that in and out is sailing.

Even the Velleda, I find, is standing yet,
Down at the alley's end, with all its plaster scaling,
—Thin, in the sickening perfume of the mignonette.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 109.

Nevermore

From Verlaine

Memory, Memory, what would'st thou have? The fall
Has put the thrush to flight across the fatal air,
The while the sun is darting a monotonous glare
On yellowing woods that thunder with a northern squall.

We were alone and in a dream we walked away,
Just she and I together, with hair and thought blown free.
Suddenly uttered, with her thrilling gaze on me,
Her voice of living gold: u What was thy happiest day?" —

Fresh and angelical, her ringing voice and sweet!
I let her have her answer in a smile discreet,
And pressed a kiss on her white hand, devotedly.

Ah, the first flowers of all, how good they are to smell!
And sounds with what a murmur of felicity
The u yes" that is the first from lips adorable.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 110.

My Familiar Dream

From Verlaine

Often I have a vision strange and close
Of an Unknown I love and who loves me,
And who is never the same, nor utterly
Another, and me she loves and me she knows.

She knows me, and my heart, alas, that clears
For her alone, is not a problem now
For her alone, and my pale sweating brow
Can she alone of all refresh, in tears.

Is she blonde, auburn, dark? I cannot say.
Her name? I know that it is soft and splendid,
As of the loves that Life has driven away.

Her gaze is as the gaze of statuary,
And she has in her voice, grave, distant, airy.
The cadence of dear voices that have ended.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. iii.

Languor

From Verlaine

I am the Empire at the end of the Decline,
Who watch the marching of the tall barbarians white,
The while I am composing some acrostics slight,
All in the golden style adance with tired sunshine.

My soul is sick at heart with an ennui supine.
Far off they tell of many a long and bloody fight.
O lack of power, being so weak for vows so light,
O lack of will to use awhile this life of mine!

O lack of will, O lack of power to die awhile!
Ah, all is drunk! Bathyllus, wilt thou always smile?
Ah, all is drunk, all eaten! There's no more to say!

Only, a bit of verse too trivial that you burn,
Only, a slave neglecting you a bit to stray,
Only, an ennui, who knows what, that makes you mourn!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 112.

Oh Heavy, Heavy Was My Mind

From Verlaine

Oh Heavy, Heavy Was My Mind
Because, because of womankind.

I never could be comforted,
Far off although my heart had fled.

Although my mind, although my heart
Far from the woman kept apart.

I never could be comforted,
Far off although my heart had fled.

My heart, my heart in very ruth
Said to my mind: u Is it the truth,

Is it the truth—or has it been—
This exile proud, this exile keen?”

My mind said to my heart: cc Do I
Myself make out this mystery

Of exiles who remain at home.
However far away they roam?”

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 113–114.

Cydalises

From Gérard De Nerval

Where are our mistresses?
They are within the tomb!
They have more happiness
Within a lovelier home!

They with the seraphim
Are deep in the blue sky,
 And with their praises hymn
The mother of the Most High!

O virgin in first flower,
O snow-white bride to be,
Love-woman for an hour,
To fade in misery,

Eternity profound
Was smiling in your eyes!
Lights that the world has drowned,
Rekindle in the skies!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 115.

Delphica

From Gérard De Nerval

Daphne, do you remember this old strain,
Under the sycamore or laurel white,
Or olives, myrtles, or blown willows light,
This song of love. . . that always starts again?

Do you remember the great columned fane,
The bitter citrons that you still would bite,
The cavern, death to many a wreckless wight,
Where sleep old offspring of the dragon slain?

They will return, these gods you weep always!
Time will bring back the reign of ancient days;
The earth has quivered with the breath immortal. . .

And yet the sibyl of the Roman mien
Sleeps still beneath the arch of Constantine:
—And nothing has disturbed that haughty portal.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 116.

Mignon's Song

From Goethe

Knowest thou the country where the citrons bloom?
Gold oranges light up the leafy gloom,
Indolent wind is in the azure skies,
The myrtle still and high the laurel rise.
Dost thou remember? Thither, thither,
I would, Beloved, we might go together.

Knowest thou the mansion with the columned walls?
The laughter of the light is in its halls,
And marble statues stand and gaze at me:
“Unhappy child, what have they done to thee?”
Dost thou remember? Thither, thither,
I would, my saviour, we might go together.

Knowest thou the mountain and its cloudy tryst?
The mule seeks out the way amid the mist,
The dragon's ancient brood is in the cave,
Plunges the cliff, and over it the wave.
Dost thou remember? Thither, thither
Our way! O Father, let us go together!

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 117–118.

Song

From Heine

He was an olden monarch,
Hoary of hair, his heart had died.
The lonely olden monarch
Married a maiden bride.

He was a page in Maytime,
Yellow his hair, glad was his mien.
He bore the silken trailing
Train of the maiden queen.

Knowest thou the olden ditty,
So full of sweet, so full of woe?
They had to die together,
They loved each other so.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 119.

To Zante

From Ugo Foscolo

Ne'er shall I reach again the shores divine
Where was delivered my body young,
O Zante, who dost in the surges shine
Of the Greek sea, from which was Venus sprung
Virgin, and filled those isles with flower and vine
At her first smile, whence is there still a tongue
For thy clear clouds and all those boughs of thine
In the immortal verse of him who sung
The fatal waters and the exile strange,
From which, made fair with fame and bitter change,
Ulysses kissed his rocky Ithaca.
Thou of thy son shalt have the song alone,
O mother land of mine: the fates withdraw
From us the grave that thou might'st weep upon.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 120.

On the Death of a Brother

From Ugo Foscolo

Some day, if I go not forever flying
From people to people, thou shalt see me come
Upon thy grave, O thou my brother, sighing
Of thy so gentle years the fallen bloom.
Our mother, now alone to her night nighing,
Speaks about me unto thine ashes dumb;
But with wild hands to reach you I am trying,
And lonely from afar salute my home.
I know the hostile Fates and unconfessed
Cares that were in thy life tempestuously,
And at thy portal pray I too for rest.
This out of so much hope to-day is left!
O strangers, yield at least the bones of me
Unto the bosom of the mother left.

First published in *Poems*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914, pp. 121.

Idols

Stage II | Modernism, war, and formal rupture, 1916

The complete second book, including both translations and the author's critical note.

Clouds

For Forms That Are Free

Loosen the web, Arachne, and we will waltz,
Loosen, Arachne,
The spider-web that has ensnared
The feet in such a struggling bergamask.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 11.

Voyage à l'Infini

The swan existing
Is like a song with an accompaniment
Imaginary.

Across the glassy lake,
Across the lake to the shadow of the willows,
It is accompanied by an image,
—*As by Debussy's*
"Reflets dans l'eau."

The swan that is
Reflects
Upon the solitary water—breast to breast
With the duplicity:
"The other one!"
And breast to breast it is confused.
O visionary wedding! O stateliness of the procession!
It is accompanied by the image of itself
Alone.

At night
The lake is a wide silence,
Without imagination.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 12–13.

Dirge

Make of the moon a motion,
You
Who are laid to rest,
Make of the moon about the eaves of space,
You who upon the earth
Are doing nothing,
The circles of the swallow
In the twilight,
You who have left above the empty house
The night
In suspense.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 14.

The Voice of One Dead

Of the relented limbs and the braid, O lady,
Bound up in haste at parting,
The secret is kept.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 15.

June

These breaking buds,
These buds in a nest of leaves. . .

What wings have covered them,
And the warmth of what brooding mother,
That the roses,
The roses themselves,
Come out?

The roses are trying their petals. . .
Fly away, roses, after the wind.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 16.

To the Gatherer

Heavy with the life among the leaves
The bough
Is heavy with your hands. . .
It yields.
And will the yielding bough at the last
Break?
Or at the last made light
By hands that gather and cannot hold,
Will it swing away as it used to swing,
Out of the reach of hands,
High with one apple?

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 17.

At Daybreak

I HAD a dream and I awoke with it,
Poor little thing that I had not unclasped
After the kiss good-bye.

And at the surface how it gasped,
This thing that I had loved in the unlit
Depth of the drowsy sea. . .
Ah me,
This thing with which I drifted toward the sky.

Driftwood upon a wave,
Senseless the motion that it gave.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 18.

Autobiographic

Permanently in a space that is anywhere here
While I am I,
I am temporarily
Always now.

And at the eternal
Instant
I look—
The eye-glassed I
At the not I, the opaque
Others,
Eye-glassed too.
And I who see of them
Only the glasses
Looking,
See of myself
In looking-glasses
Faces
Distorted.
And throughout the transparent
Spaciousness,
Which is so extensively
The present
Point
Located personally—
A solid geometry
Of vacancy
Bounded by the infinite
Absence,
Foreshorten
To the end
Of me. . .
Walls and ceilings
Of my cellular
Isolation
Wrecked by perspective,
Habitable cubes
Of static

Surfaces of plaster
Prolonged in flight.
And it is I who hold them back,
And it is I who let them go,
These gray planes plunging
In an emptiness
Blue,
These rampant sides of pyramids
That converge
To nothing
While I am I.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 19–24.

Statues

The Night of Ariadne

She waited in a grotto by the sea
The vital visit of the Minotaur
Untouched. The night had grown oracular
With tongues of licking heat that were not he,
She knew not how she knew, reluctantly.
The entrance of the grotto was a scar
Of heaven, and in it lengthened, star by star,
Stalactites to her credulous chastity.

Heavy the darkness that she lay beneath;
The tide was swelling; and a rosy wreath
She vowed to an old pagan monolith,
Her god, if it would send against the myth
A man. . . And in a dream she seemed to sheath
The dripping blade that he would enter with.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 25.

Human

In a cathedral that aspires in thought
I am. . . and I perhaps am not alone!
I am an altar to a God unknown,
And with the candles I am clear and hot.
And if He cannot be it matters not;
A reaper of the whirlwind who have sown,
I think a God and so I am my own;
And toward myself so long in me forgot

I take the ancient attitude of prayer,
Yes, even as by the crib, beneath the flame
Of the familiar face. . . Or was it where
I thought of one too strange who never came,
And closed my empty arms about the air,
Feeling the nakedness of her first name.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 26.

The Divine Comedy

And if it was a dream it was enough—
It lasted like a world, it kept awake
The ghost of Beatrice; and to that break
Of day which brake at last the dreamy stuff,
Breaking to death the forest wild and rough,
It lit the night, and by the troubled lake
It spake as with her voice that never spake:
“O peace, be still!” to all the winds thereof.

The comedy of Dante Alighieri!
For dreams he left his birthright of despair,
The lives that stiffened into statuary
In the cathedral of his proud poor prayer.
For him the bride beside the mother Mary
Let down the heavenly ladders of her hair.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 27.

Au Quatrième: Rue des Écoles

I HAVE a memory of a lonely room. . .
The walls of it were as a garden wall.
O gardens of the world, O lost perfume!
Outside the world I read the *Fleurs du Mal*.
Ah me, I seemed to understand it all,
Till in the door I saw I know not whom.
She said: "What are the flowers that you let fall?"
She seemed to say: "It's I, it's I who bloom."

Was I at last afraid to be alone?
"Who are you, woman whom I have not known?"
I asked, and as she gazed: "Are you a child?"
Gravely she gave her lips and she was gone. . .
Gone with her wistful answer which she smiled:
"I am the deepest valley to the dawn."

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 28.

Landscape and Figures

The twilight is returning—come away!
It gropes among the trees, it is confused
About the golden bodies that we used
In earnest and a little while in play.
The twilight that has yielded up its day
Clings to us now like some poor thing seduced
Who on the hilly bosoms has unloosed
The long disheveled sunlight growing gray.

Hide from the haggard touches of the sun
Your yielding body, that it may be one
With all the dark; and for the breathless bed
Gather the quiet that the Lyra shed,
When for the tryst supreme that no one knows
The night had the consent of a pale rose.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 29.

Dialogue

Be patient, Life, when Love is at the gate,
And when he enters let him be at home.
Think of the roads that he has had to roam.
Think of the years that he has had to wait.

*But if I let Love in I shall be late.
Another has come first—there is no room.
And I am thoughtful of the endless loom—
Let Love be patient, the importunate.*

O Life, be idle and let Love come in,
And give thy dreamy hair that Love may spin.

But Love himself is idle with his song.
Let Love come last, and then may Love last long.

Be patient, Life, for Love is not the last.
Be patient now with Death, for Love has passed,

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 30.

To a Deserted Temple at Pæstum

Is it a hushed good morrow to the sea
Or a good night, if night shall be for good,
That thou art holding in thine attitude,
O faithful Grecian fane in Italy?
Wrecked is the god who went away from thee;
Thou takest the shadows for thy widowhood;
Thou hast not fallen when the winds have wooed;
Thou art the patience of Penelope.

So dost thou hold the attitude of Greece
Toward one who wanders now the wood obscure.
Yea, though the moss be thine entablature,
The stars at last thine only mysteries,
Amid the winds that will not let thee be
Thou art a gesture of eternity.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 31–34.

Crystals

Portrait

She has a gas-lit glitter of cold stones,
She lives, and she makes light of lingerie;
And she has suffered not the little ones
To come to her, suffering you and me.

The flesh is pretty about the gentle bones,
And these at least—you feel!—have modesty,
These of her naked life the last Unknowns
That she's afraid as death to let you see.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 35.

John Davidson

O NOT for him the shore crepuscular,
The waning house, the slow obscurity;
For him the sudden setting of a star. . .
He has gone out like light upon the sea.

His are the rights of memory in all lands;
A lord of life too haughty for a crown
Laid on with hands of God, with his own hands
He laid it on his head and laid it down.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 36.

To Hasekawa

Perhaps it is no matter that you died;
Life's an incognito which you saw through.
You never told on life—you had your pride;
But life has told on you.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 37.

Song of the Souls Set Free

Wrap the earth in cloudy weather
For a shroud.
We have slipped the earthly tether,
We're above the cloud.
Peep and draw the cloud together,
Peep upon the bowed.

What can they be bowing under,
Wild and wan?
Peep, and draw the cloud asunder,
Peep, and wave a dawn.
It will make them rise and wonder
Whether we are gone.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 38.

An Old Game

Is it heavenly hide and seek,
Playmate, that you have to play?
When I closed my eyes to pray
You were breathless where you lay
On the bed, and you were weak.
When I opened them at length
It was you who had the strength,
You the earthly runaway.

Is it Seek and ye shall find
On the way that you have run,
Playmate, past the setting sun?
Or does pale Oblivion
Say her gentle Never mind?
Through the emptiness of sky
If I call no glad / spy,
Will you care, O hidden one?

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 39.

After-Thought

O WHAT can I be breathing for,
Wasting the world by being sad?
O for a breath of life! Once more
My life is willing to be glad.

Even her grave is growing glad
With grass and with the flowering suns;
Nor in the grave can she be sad
To miss the waking clarions.

She'll not be sad if I forget—
Hers is the way of being glad.
Of her I need not think. And yet. . .
It is not I, the world is sad.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 40.

Falling Asleep

O the dream that dandles
Sleepy Head!

*Lay aside your sandals
That have fled
Down a night of candles
By the bed.*

O the changing pillow
That is bare!

*Be a weeping willow
With your hair
Long. . . And on your billow
Lift me. . . where?*

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 41.

Consider the Lilies

Lilies are the beckonings
Of a world of lilies fallen,
Yielding to alighted wings
Secret pollen.

Yesterdays are ghostly sheaves,
Noon is golden on the bough.
Life is ripe among the leaves.
Beckon thou.

Wave a handkerchief of prayer,
Keep a secret in a gown.
When the wings are in the air,
Bow down.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 42.

To a Poet

What are you doing like a naughty child
To the original NON-ENTITY,
Without a wedding and a little wild,
Those moments when you say of beauty: “BE”?

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 43.

To a Garden in April

ALAS, and are you pleading now for pardon?
Spring came by night—and so there is no telling?
Spring had his way with you, my little garden. . .
You hide in leaf, but oh! your buds are swelling.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 44.

The Inner Significance of the Statues Seated Outside the Boston Public Library

How natural the way that they have greeted
Each other, like two girls excused at school:
“Sister of bronze upon the granite seated,
Hast thou an easy stool?”

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 45.

A Dying Servant

At last there was to be a time of rest,
Even before she died, the very best
Time that at last was to be all her own,
When she should not be holding back a groan
Just for the sake of some one else, and when
Among the ladies and the gentlemen,
At last being out of pain, she should not run
Back to the duty that was left undone.
She was left to herself. The old alarm
Clock had run down for good, and the lukewarm
Hot water bottles that were lying where
They lay all day no longer mattered—her
Cold feet did not feel cold or anything.
But there was something of the evening
Which she had now the time to feel. It smiled
Upon her idleness, and like a child
She said a “Now I lay me down to sleep.”
Left to herself, what had she left to keep
Of her spent self except a final tryst
For dreams, where even she might yet be kissed.
So when at last the mistress came and lay
A hand upon her brow to ease away
The difficult life, the servant, who in duty
Without complaint had found her only beauty,
Complained about that hand upon her brow:
“Don’t bother me—it is all over now.”

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 46–50.

For the Sake of Peace

To the Necrophile

After reading of the affectionate desire of Germany "to get closer to France," as expressed by the German Secretary of State to the British Ambassador at Berlin.

With love are you gone mad, O lover of France,
That you should be embracing with your arms
Her gory body for the gore that warms
Only a monster in his dalliance?
Alas! she is alive with her alarms,
Unwilling yet for the enraged romance.
Assault her sacredness of Paris, lance
Her flank with such a wound as has its charms

For you who want for your obscene amours
The body of a soul that is not yours,
For you who want a wound to enter by,
For you who want a corpse upon your heart.
Coupling with France if France would only die,
Not yours the human vow: "TILL DEATH us PART!"

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 51.

Am Tag!

William of Germany, is this the day
For which you have been drinking—or a night
Which is awakened by the dynamite
Clearing the darkness in your drunken way?
The deeds of darkness are not yours—you light
Louvains about the beds of children. Yea,
And in the churches where the women pray
For some conception of the divine right,

Them you enlighten, too—the right divine
Is yours! And from a heaven above the Rhine
Your visitation! And immaculate
Is the conception as the women wait,
Beneath the dove-like wings of aeroplanes,
The pleasure that you feel in their remains.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 52.

Infinite Mercy

Can He who heard the plea for ignorance:
"Forgive them, for they know not what they do!"
Stooping to the uplifted cross of France,
Forgive the Germans—they who know and knew?

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 53.

To Louvain

Old city that ascended in a cloud,
You dropped the ashes which the earth is proud
To wear for you while all the mouths of Krupp
Are mocking still: "Go up, bald head, go up!"

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 54.

The War Lord

“My heart bleeds for Louvain.”

“My heart bleeds for Louvain.”
WHOM the lord loves he chastens. And he bleeds
That you, Louvain, are burning in his hell.
And there is not a Christ that intercedes.
The lord is in his heaven. All is well.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 55.

Instructions for the Submarine That Sank the Lusitania

Rise to an infamy, take a breath and dive,
And to the children drowning in the sea
Prove that there is a way to keep alive
Beneath the level of humanity.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 56.

To Belgium

Lifeward at last, some day,
When no one shall be left to say Alas,
Children shall follow along the trodden way
The lure of the reviving grass.

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 57.

Neutrality

Not by a dirge or a pæan
Breathe of the wrongs of France!
Watch, Laodicean,
And wait upon the chance.

The game is for the great—
And whose the sacrifice?
Laodicean, wait
And watch the loaded dice!

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 58–60.

Translations

*The Afternoon of a Faun**Eclogue by Mallarmé*

Those nymphs, I would perpetuate them.

Even so clear

Their coloring light, it dances in the atmosphere

Heavy with leafy sleeps.

Was it a dream I loved?

My doubt, a mass of night primeval, is removed

In many a subtle branch which proves, being still these very

Woods, that, alas, I gave myself all solitary

For triumph the default ideal of the rose.

Let us reflect

if women of whom thou thus dost gloze

Image a longing of thy senses fanciful!

Faun, the illusion is escaping from the cool

Blue eyes, even as a spring in tears, of the more chaste:

The other, though, all sighs, thou sayest is to contrast

Even as a daytime zephyr warm upon thy fleece!

Not so! through the exhausted swoon and motionless

Stifling with heats the morning fresh if it rebels,

Murmurs that water only which my flute expels

On the grove sprayed with notes; and the one breath of air

Out of the two pipes prompt in its exhaling ere

It scatters all around the sound in a dry sprinkle,

Is, over the horizon that has not one wrinkle,

The visible and tranquil breath illusory

Of inspiration, which once more attains the sky.

O ye Sicilian borders of a quiet swamp

Which, to the sun's despite, is plundered by my pomp,

Tacit beneath the flowers of sparkles, CELEBRATE

"How I cut here the hollow rushes subjugate

By skill; when on the glaucous gold of verdurings

Remote which dedicate their vine unto the springs,

Billows a whiteness animal in the repose:

And how in the preluding slow where the pipe grows,

That flight of swans, ah no! of naiads springs away

Or dives. . .”

*Inert, all is afire in tawny day,
Not showing by what art dashed off in company
Too much of hymen wished by one who strikes the key:
Then shall I waken to the primal zeal, upright
And solitary in a flood antique of light,
Lilies! and of you all the one for artlessness.*

*Other than that soft nothing which their lips express,
The kiss, which keeps the faithless safe by its low sound,
My breast, virgin of proof, bears witness to a wound
Mysterious, occasioned by some august tooth;
But hush! there needs for confidant of such a truth
The large and double reed performed upon by day:
Which, as it sucks the trouble of the cheek away,
Dreams, in a long extended solo, of amusing
The beauty of the neighbourhood by a confusing
False of that beauty and our song infatuated;
And that as high as love itself is modulated
It may make vanish from the common dream of thighs
Immaculate or backs pursued by my closed eyes,
A loud and ineffectual monotonous line.*

*Try then to flower again, pipe of the flights, malign
Syrinx, upon the lakes where thou for me must wait!
I, of my rumor proud, will at great length relate
Of goddesses, and by idolatrous imagery
Remove the girdles yet from their obscurity:
Just so, when from the grapes I have sucked out the lustre,
Laughter, I lift to summer skies the empty cluster
To banish a regret by trickery dispersed,
And blowing into the translucent skins, athirst
For drunkenness, until the evening I look through.*

*O nymphs, let us inflate some MEMORIES new.
“My eye, piercing the reeds, transfixed each heavenly
Neck, which beneath the river drowns its ardency
With cries of anger to the heaven of the wood;
And the resplendent bath of tresses is bestrewed
In glitterings and quiverings, O diamonds!
I run; when, at my feet, are coupled (with their wounds*

Of languor tasted in that pang of being twain)
 These slumberers in just their arms at hazard lain;
 Without unclasping them I lift them, and invade
 This shrubbery, detested by the frivolous shade,
 Of roses spending in the sun all fragrancy,
 Where likewise in the day consumed may our sport be”
 Curse of the virgins, I adore thee, O delight
 Ferocious of the naked burdens blest that fight
 To shun my lip afire which, as a flash of lightning
 Trembles, is drinking from the flesh the secret frightening:
 From the unkind one’s feet to bosoms of the shy,
 Who yields at once an innocence, all watery
 With foolish tears or with less doleful vaporing.
 “My crime, it is that I, glad to be conquering
 Those traitorous fears, divided the disheveled heap
 Of kisses, which the gods would well commingled keep;
 For hardly had I tried to hide an ardent smile
 Under the creases glad of one (holding the while
 By a mere finger, so that thus her plummy white
 Might color at her sister’s passion now alight’,
 (The little one naïve who never blushed at all:)
 When from my arms, undone by deaths equivocal,
 That prey of mine, forevermore ingrate, gets free,
 Pitiless of the sob intoxicating me”

Well! to the bliss by others shall I yet be led
 With their hair knotted to the horns upon my head:
 Thou knowest, my passion, how, all purple and full grown,
 Each pomegranate bursts and with the bees makes moan;
 And blood of ours, possessed by what it would acquire,
 Flows for the whole eternal swarm of the desire.
 Now when this wood with gold and cinders is illumed,
 A festival is raised among the leaves consumed.
 Etna! it is in thee by Venus visited
 With her ingenuous heels posed on thy lava bed,
 When rumbles a sleep unhappy or fades away the glow.
 I hold the queen!

O certain castigation.

No,

*But empty of words the spirit and this body aswoon
At last surrender to the haughty hush of noon:
Sleep now in the oblivion of the blasphemy,
Stretched on the thirsty sand and as I love to be
Mouth open to the potent wine-star!*

*Couple, adieu;
I am to see the shadow into which ye grew.*

First published in *Idols*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1916, pp. 61–68.

Fifth Canto of the Inferno

From Dante Alighieri

Thus I descended from the primal zone
Down to the second, which less space embraces,
And so much greater pain as stings to moan.

There Minos stands and horribly grimaces;
Inspects the sins about the entrancy,
Judges, and as he girds himself he places.

I say that when the soul born evilly
Comes in his presence, it confesses all;
And that appraiser of iniquity

Discerns for it the hell proportional;
He girds his tail as many times about
As the degrees that he will have it fall.

Always before him stands a mighty rout;
They go, each in its turn, for the decree;
They speak, they hear, and then they are cast out,

“O thou who nearest the dolorous hostelry,”
To me, when he beheld me, Minos cried,
Quitting the act of that great ministry,

“Look how thou enter, and in whom confide;
Deceive thee not the wideness of the gate.”
And my guide answered: “Why dost thou too chide?

“Do not impede his course predestinate.
Thus is it willed where is the potency
For what is willed; and make no more debate.”

Straightway begin the notes of misery
To make themselves be heard; straightway I come
Where much lamenting makes assault on me.

I reached a region of all radiance dumb,
Which howls like ocean in a hurricane,
When it is fought by winds grown quarrelsome.

The hellish tempest, which will never wane,

Impels the spirits with its violence;
Whirling and buffeting, it makes their pain.

When they approach the broken eminence,
There are the shrieks, the plaint, the lamentation;
There they blaspheme at God's omnipotence.

I learned that into such a castigation
The evil users of the flesh are cast,
Who reason subjugate to inclination.

And as their wings do bear the starlings past,
In the cold season, in a great dense pack,
So bears the spirits maledight that blast.

It bears them up and down, and out and back;
There is no hope to comfort them for aye,
Not of repose, but even of lesser wrack.

And as the cranes go chanting forth their lay,
Forming themselves in air in a long trail,
So I beheld those spirits, on that fray

Of winds borne up, approach with sounds of wail;
Whereat I questioned: "Master, who are these
Folk whom the murky air doth so assail?"

"The first of those about whose histories
Thou longest to know," he answered thereupon,
"The empress was of many languages.

"With vice of luxury she was so undone,
Illicit she made licit by decree,
To take the blame in which she had been drawn.

"She is Semiramis, and we read that she
Succeeded Ninus and had been his spouse;
She used to have the Soldan's empery.

"The next is she who broke for love her vows
Unto Sichaeus' dust and took her life;
Then Cleopatra the luxurious.

"See Helena, for whom an age so rife
With wrongs revolved; and see Achilles grand,
Who with his love at last fell into strife;

“See Paris, Tristan”; and with pointing hand
He showed and named a thousand shades and more,
Whom love had out of our existence banned.

When I had listened to my counsellor
Naming so many an olden dame and knight,
I was bewildered with the grief I bore.

And I began: “Poet, would that I might
Speak with that couple who together fly,
And seem upon the wind to be so light!”

And he to me: “Thou’lt see when they be by
Us closer, and to them do thou then pray
By love which leads them, and they will draw nigh.”

Soon as to us the tempest makes them sway,
I raised my voice: “O spirits wearied,
Come speak with us, if no one doth gainsay.”

As doves that are by love solicited,
Toward the sweet nest with wings held still and high,
Come through the air by their volition sped,

So these withdrew from Dido’s company,
Towards us approaching through the air malign,
Such was the force of my affectionate cry.

“O living creature, gracious and benign,
Who through the purple air goest visiting
Us who with blood made earth incarnadine,

“Were friend of ours the Universal King,
To him would we be praying for thy peace,
Since thou dost pity our perverse suffering.

“Of what to hear and what to say thou please,
That will we hear and say to both of you,
The while, as now, the wind relinquishes.

“There sits the city wherewithin I grew
Upon the shore to which descends the Po,
To be at peace with all his retinue.

“Love, which in gentle hearts is soon aglow,

Caught him with the fair body of which I be
Bereft, and still for me the way works woe.

“Love, which from loving leaves no loved one free,
Caught me with the so great delight therefrom,
Not yet, thou seest, does it abandon me.

“Love led us onward to a single doom;
For him who slew us doth Caina wait.”
Away from them to us did these words come.

When I had heard those spirits desolate,
I bowed my head, and bowed I let it be
Till the seer said: “What dost thou meditate?”

When I made answer I began: “Ah, me!
How many tender thoughts, how great a yearning
Led these unto the pass of misery!”

And once again I spake, and toward them turning,
Began: “Francesca, this thy mortifying
Moves me to tears with pity and with mourning.

“But tell me: at the time of the sweet sighing,
What way and at what sign did love dispose
That ye should know the longings mystifying?”

And she to me: “There are no greater woes
Than the remembrances of happy days
In misery; and this thy teacher knows.

“But since to learn about the earliest ways
Of this our love thou hast a wish so dear,
I will do even as one who weeps and says.

“Upon a day we read for our good cheer
Of Lancelot, how love held him in thrall;
We were alone and without any fear.

“That reading urged at many an interval
Our eyes together and paled the cheeks of us;
But it was just one moment made us fall.

“When we had read how one so amorous
Had kissed the smile that he was longing for,
This one, who always must be by me thus,

Kissed me upon the mouth, trembling all o'er;
Galehaut the book, and he 'twas written by!
Upon that day we read in it no more."

So sorely did the other spirit cry,
While the one spake, that for the very dread
I swooned as if I were about to die,
And I fell down even as a man falls dead.

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Note to “*The Afternoon of a Faun*”

What is the sense of *L’Après-midi d’un Faune*, a masterpiece that is almost popular—in so far as it is known as the poem by Mallarmé—as a “miracle of obscurity”? The better known music which interprets the poem for Debussy and the dance which interprets it for Nijinsky are independent works of art; and the critical interpretations of Gosse and Remy de Gourmont are certainly either groping or a little superficial. The obvious love-story which seems to be what they see in *L’Après-midi d’un Faune* is in reality a philosophic allegory. *L’Après-midi d’un Faune* is one of the great dream-fictions, the greatest of which is the *Divina Commedia*. It is a dream within a day-dream—a sort of solipsistic drama in which the dreams are the symbols which the dreamer has invented for his desires, and which he strives by all the human means of logic, art, and action to endow with actual existence.

The faun, the solitary dreamer, is a compound of sensuality and imagination; and he is so divided by his double nature that, both in the long soliloquy which he dramatises by addressing himself and replying to himself and in the pathetic fallacy of the act with which the drama culminates, he mistakes himself for two. And the doubleness which he finds in himself he finds in that compound of the actual and the illusory which is his world. It is not the poem, however difficult it may be, which is obscure. The poem is a clear picture, always coherent and precise, of a mind humanly obscure to itself in the presence of the natural confusion. The remarkable duplicity with which almost every word in the poem is made to express a double meaning is an index to the ingenuity of such a mind in its attempt to reconcile the inherent contradictions.

When in the first words of the poem the faun exclaims, “Those nymphs, I would perpetuate them,” he is half awakened—as I think—from a dream which he is still mistaking for the reality, so undisturbing is the transition from the brilliant dream itself of rosy nudities to the sun and roses of his Sicilian solitude. In a moment, however, as the nymphs who have already excited his passion seem to be melting away, his waking certainly is troubled by a doubt. Were they real or a dream or a waking hallucination due to physical desire? They were not a dream—as he argues, naïve in his error—since he imagines now that he had simply mistaken for his victims the flesh-colored roses in the wood. And they were not an hypnagogic hallucination—as he naïvely

continues to argue—for the simple reason that as he plays upon his flute he is completely engrossed in the pure inspiration of his music.

Baffled in his attempt to understand the true nature of the nymphs who have now disappeared, the faun, with a sort of hedonistic scepticism, resigns himself to his memories of the wonderful experience as the only truth available.

Invoking to his aid the quiet swamp where grow the rushes from which he makes his pipes, he remembers—his memories are recorded throughout the poem in the italicised passages—how, as he was tuning up, he startled into flight a group of nymphs whom he at first mistook for swans; how he spied on them as they bathed in the stream; and how, as he followed them again, he came upon two who were clasped together in amorous sleep; how he carried them off into a thicket of roses; how he delighted in their struggles; and how, just as he was kissing one and holding the other by a finger which was not, perhaps, so simple as he says, they finally escaped, leaving him still unsatisfied.

This record of his memories the faun interrupts from time to time by a running commentary in which he determines that the only trace of the vanished nymphs—since they have left no trace in the environment—is the invisible wound in his breast. The pain which they have left behind he immediately attempts to assuage by diverting it into music. The diversion, however, is in the end unsatisfying; and throwing away his useless instrument, he attempts by poetising to inflate the remembered past into a sort of fallacious present, which is indeed the essence of the descriptive arts. But in spite of all ingenious use of memory and imagination the departure of the nymphs leaves him still unsatisfied; nothing imaginative can satisfactorily substitute the reality; and under the domination of his growing passion, he attempts to realize his dream by action. Deceived by the remarkable vagary about Etna into a belief that he has actual possession of Venus, he is betrayed into an act which brings with it the final disillusion. From the tragic self-defeat of that high dream of perpetuating nymphs there is now no refuge but sleep—a drunken sleep in which he may lose himself completely.

When the faun, as he accordingly falls asleep, exclaims at the end of the poem, “Couple, adieu;
I go to see the shadow into which ye grew,” it is noon, and the attempt which he has made throughout the morning to perpetuate the dream of the preceding

night is finally abandoned. “The Afternoon of a Faun” is the afternoon of sleep which follows—the afternoon which is never mentioned in the text and which is only for a moment foreshadowed as “the oblivion of the blasphemy.” It is as if the poem began as it is ending. The words advance as far as the threshold of unconsciousness. “The rest is silence”—a silence in which the dreamer and the dream, after the essential separation, are reconciled at last in a common extinction.

Author’s note from **Idols** (1916), pp. 78–81.

Dada Periodical Works

Stage III | New York Dada, 1916–1919

Seven uncollected works in chronological order, reset and accompanied by their first-publication facsimiles.

ING

Ing? Is it possible to mean ing?

Suppose

for the termination in g

a disoriented

series

of the simple fractures

in sleep.

Soporific

has accordingly a value for soap

so present to

sew pieces.

And p says: Peace is.

And suppose the i

to be big in ing

as Beginning.

Then Ing is to ing

as aloud

accompanied by times

And is possible to meaning

in garsis.

First published in *Rogue*, series II, no. 2 (December 1916), p. 4.

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By Walter Conrad Arensberg

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and the meaning is a possibility

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First publication of "ING."

Axiom

From a determinable horizon
 absent
 spectacularly from a midnight
 which has yet to make public
 a midnight
 in the first place incompatibly copied
the other
 in observance of the necessary end
 guarantees
the simultaneous insularity
 of a structure
 self-contained
a little longer
 than the general direction
 of goods opposed
 tangentially.

First published in *The Blind Man*, no. 2 (May 1917), p. 8.

Theorem

For purposes of illusion
 the actual ascent of two waves
 transparent to a basis
 which has a disappearance of its own
is timed
 at the angle of incidence
 to the swing of a suspended
 lens
from which the waves wash
 the protective coloration.
Through the resultant exposure
 to a temporal process
an emotion
 ideally distant
 assumes on the uneven surface
 descending
 as the identity to be demonstrated
the three dimensions
 with which it is incommensurate.

First published in *The Blind Man*, no. 2 (May 1917), p. 9.

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 the three dimensions with which it is incommensurate.
 WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG.

First publication of "Theorem."

Arithmetical Progression of the Verb 'To Be'

On a sheet of paper
 dropped with the intention of demolishing
 space
 by the simple subtraction of a necessary plane
draw a line that leaves the present
 in addition
 carrying forward to the uncounted columns
 of the spatial ruin
 now considered as complete
the remainder of the past.

The act of disappearing
 which in the three-dimensional
 is the fate of the convergent
 vista

is thus
 under the form of the immediate
arrested in a perfect parallel
 of being
 in part.

First published in 391, no. 5 (June–July 1917), p. 4.

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WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG

First publication of "Arithmetical Progression of the Verb 'To Be'."

For 'Shady Hill,' Cambridge, Mass.

A drink into home use indicates early Italian. Otherwise

“the element of bow
keeps insides. Nothing has now.”

But after the carpet whose usury can eat thirds?

Blunders are belted in cousins. Use what listens on Sunday, and catchy elms
will oxidize pillows. Any need is original in absence.

The clothes are on the parlor. They are acted by buttons. To extract the meet,
invert as to the light, registering the first position at half. The passage is in
time.

As at the end of an equation of two to green,
which have the butters of extra broken
on badges biting a needle to partners
if only the bridge is fluent
let it not nice.

INTERFERE IN ORDER TO MORrow was once upon a timePIECE OF
MY Mind you do not

First published in 391, no. 5 (June–July 1917), p. 5.

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WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG

First publication of "For 'Shady Hill,' Cambridge, Mass.."

Partie d'échecs entre Picabia et Roché

L'amour propre, pour évaporer la vitrine d'usage, se déshabille dans le dictionnaire, toujours capable, devant la phrase "En Même Temps," de se reconnaître, en louchant en bleu, comme le seul échantillon de la compagnie d'assurance.

Mais au lieu de sortir au coin des mots, la gable industrielle emboîte l'exégèse du pont d'Iéna, où le fil conducteur, comme rince-bouche du North German Lloyd, décolle un procès-verbal de timbre aquatique.

Sous l'abat-jour du pan d'essence il y a quelquefois, à la rigueur presque cadavérique, l'occasion de boire le long du journal interrompu par l'ellipse légitime.

Selon la pariaide purement opaque des loyers, la soupape à vagues végétales aurait dû se trouver déchiffrée. C'est l'ombilic de la règle qui l'exige, bien exhalé d'avance dans l'apparat du jour. Néanmoins, à l'exposition hors concours des lentilles triangulaires, la tanière s'est retirée à prix fixe, changeant d'étoile l'algèbre des articulations gazeuses.

Au bout d'un ou deux iambes de cosmétique; naturalisés en ballade d'auto, rien ne reste des cochenilles de fifre que les échelles couturières. Peu à peu, entre l'habituel au plafond et la douche nasale d'emblée, l'indifférence qualitative s'emplâtre dans le cas bien connu des varices.

Ça m'est un tout petit peu égal

First published in 391, no. 7 (August 1917), p. 3.

PARTIE D'ÉCHECS
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WALTER CONRAD ARENSBERG

First publication of "Partie d'échecs entre Picabia et Roché."

Vacuum Tires: A Formula for the Digestion of Figments

à la la

When the shutter from a dry angle comes between the pin and a special delivery it appears at blue. Likewise in concert with strings on any other flow the clock of third evenings past Broadway is alarming, because it is written in three-four time to chewing gum; if you upset the garter, the r remains west, or to the left of flesh, as in revolving or Rector's. The whole effect is due to blinds, drawn in arithmetic to a sketch of halves, which are smoked into double disks. By such a system of instantaneous tickets a given volume of camera, analyzed for uric acid, leaves a deposit of ten dollars, and the style decrees that human surfaces be worn for transparencies, the price mark being removed from the lapel.

If, however, the showcases are on trolleys, bottles must be corked for the make-up of negroes. Or if a goitre appears in the elevation of the host, a set of false teeth, picked for the high lights by burnt matches, must be arranged at once in three acts. For the first provide electric fixtures that are tuned to cork tips. For the second consideration is flour, thirds being a key that is rarely advertised. Notwithstanding the thermometer into which the conductor spits, the telephone meets in extremes. A window will change the subject for standing room only.

Yet in spite of a Sunday ceiling to the same schedule, condensed into the bucket of a Melba lip-stick, the traffic-cop will empty the ladder to an equal number of rounds. This bandage is the legislature of taxis to taxidermists, hanging the dessert for bricklayers to little remains of cube root. The up town exit may or may not be in manuscript, but as a result of the binomial theorem of closing time, the water-mains, whenever they are directed to funerals, will make a vacuum flash.

First published in TNT (March 1919), p. 6.

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First publication of "Vacuum Tires: A Formula for the Digestion of Figments."

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Colophon

This critical reading edition was designed in the Green/Extremes house format: six by nine inches, cream pages, EB Garamond, restrained blue and orange accents, one poem beginning on each new page, and source-specific publication notes. The cover uses Brian Kim Stefans's no-text artwork, centered and cropped without distortion.

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Los Angeles, 2026