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Beyond the Shadows

BY

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BEYOND

Beyond the darkness that I feel
 Descending like a pall of night,
Beyond the fears that ofttimes steal,—
 There's always Love—and Quenchless Light!

Beyond the hurt that seems to be,
 When my spurned heart grows lone and sore;
Beyond the barriers I see,—
 There's always Love—an Open Door!

Beyond my weary struggle here
 Where discord seemeth ne'er to cease;
Beyond the turmoil and the tear,—
 There's always Love—and Perfect Peace!

Beyond Gethsemane's dark hour,—
 Up Calvary's hill my cross I've borne;—
Beyond the grave—of vanquished power,—
 There's always Love—and Easter Morn!

Beyond my heart's unfilled desire,
 Beyond earth's chastening and the rod;
Beyond the longing, and the fire,—
 There's always Love—and in Love—God!

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UNSEEN

Dear God, make us to see
 What Life doth mean;
And where death seems to be,
 See the Unseen.

Lord, make our hearts to feel,—
 'Mid those who slay,—
That Love alone is real,
 And lives to-day.

Father, make us to know,—
 Though broken, sore,—
We are Thy children, so—
 Whole evermore.

O Love Divine, this hour,—
 Soiled overmuch,—
Make us to clasp Love's flower,
 Thy robe to touch.

Thou, whom no eye hath seen,
 Our sight renew
To see the things Unseen,
 Eternal, true.

NATURE'S MESSAGE

Do shadows bid thee doubt God's love? Ah, listen
 To birds awing;
Watch thou the dew-bespangled blossoms glisten,
 Breathe in the Spring;
Quaff of the nectar from a lily's chalice;—
 Then look above,
And, with uplifted soul that knows no malice,
 Say—"God is Love!"

Oh, dost thou doubt that man is made immortal?
 Behold the morn!
Though day expires, through dawn's eternal portal
 It comes—reborn.
Beyond the leaves that fall in autumn splendor,
 Is April's breath—
And Life renewed; then say, with heart made tender—
 "There is no death!"

THE VOICE OF AUTUMN

Across the blaze of glory in thy hand,
There falls a prescient shadow o'er the land,
And as thou holdest to my eager lips
The cup of beauty from which splendor drips,
I hear the beat
Of winter's feet;
While breezes say:—
"Death comes this way."

Nay! not death's advent dost thou herald here:
Life, life!—in all its fullness and its cheer
Is pulsing through each flaming leaf, until
It rings triumphant from each vale and hill.
List! this the call:—
"Life—over all!"
There speaks through thee—
Eternity!

From out the goblet that thou offerest me,
I quaff the promise of the Spring to be;
Though in death's guise, I look beyond the veil,
Up, up—where transient earthly splendors pale.
Below I stand;
Yet, on each hand,
Thou bid'st me see—
My Heaven to be.

When Life shall come to me,—that men call death;
May I look past the lie of mortal breath,
Nor list the minor strain that, through the roll
Of Life's grand anthem, sobs into my soul;
But hear the call:—
"Life—over all!"
And know—like thee—
Eternity!

IF

If Faith were not!—
Then couldst thou cast away
The seed within thy hand and soul,
Nor send aloft like waves of incense sweet
The prayers that rise until with God they meet.
Yea, thou couldst rend the sacred scroll
For life were but to-day:—
If Faith were not!

If Hope were not!—
Then thou the bud couldst rend,
And trample 'neath thy scornful feet
Its prescient promise of supernal bloom,
Nor quaff ambrosial draughts of its perfume;
Then thou couldst call life incomplete,
And this, alas, the end:—
If Hope were not!

If Love were not!—
Then what were seed or bloom?
A lifeless thing—no joy to give;
Yea, thou couldst spurn the beauty with a sneer,
And hold naught precious or eternal here;
But mourn that thou must serve and live,—
Thy only goal—a tomb:—
If Love were not!

If God were not!—
Then couldst thou rail at Fate
And curse this finite seeming span,—
Because the blossom faded in thy hand;
Nor bless the scattered seeds, nor understand
The Immortality of Man;
Then thou couldst cry, "Too late!"—
If God were not!

IDOLS

I builded an idol to Love one day,
And decked it with garlands of flowers;
I lavished my best,—but it crumbled away
'Neath its weight of delusive hours:—
For my Love—was a face,
And a form of grace.

I builded an idol to Faith one day,
And hung it with jewels rare;
But it rocked to its base of worthless clay,
With its burden of unanswered prayer:—
For my Faith—was a creed,
Without blossom or seed.

I builded an idol to God one day,
And offered my life—my youth;
But it shattered to fragments, till dust it lay—
In the white-hot flame of Truth:—
For my God—was a fate,
Compounded of hate.

FROM THE DEPTHS

Deep in the depths of earth
Where blackness covers thee,
Look down, and naught of worth
Thy blinded eyes shall see;
But lift thy gaze above,—
E'en though the sky seems far,—
And thou, through Faith and Love,
By day shalt see a star.

FORGIVENESS

Forgive you—for what?—that you turned me
 To look at the stars?
When bitterly, harshly you spurned me,
 You wrested the bars
From my soul, and I staggered forth weeping,
 Unable to see
At the first,—so long I'd been sleeping,—
 That lo, I was free!

You goaded me, flayed me,—till bleeding
 I woke:—oh, 'twas pain!
My eyes throbbed with light-stabs, unheeding
 The glorious gain.
And stunned by the blow that had felled me,
 I cried —e'en though saved—
For the prison in which you had held me
 A captive enslaved.

The world says you wronged me:—how badly
 Men see, at the best.
They read but the surface, and sadly
 Deny all the rest;—
With Heaven's treasure mine for the taking,
 They pity the while,
And marvel my heart is not breaking,—
 Appalled at my smile.

Forgive you?—why almost I love you
 For dealing the blow
That made me look past and above you,
 Where beacon-lights glow.
You freed my caged spirit for living;
 And so, even yet,
I thank you:—there's naught for forgiving,—
 Nor would I forget.

GOD'S ROSE

In the flush of the Dawn God fashioned a Rose,—
 (And the Rose and the Dawn were—You!)
 Like a prayer of cheer,
 He placed it here
In my heart, all fresh from His hand—and new.

In the hush of the Morn God gathered His Rose,—
 (And the Rose and the Morn were—You!)
 So the searing ray
 Of a weary day,
And the palling shadows, it never knew.

Now the Rose blooms on in Eternal Morn,—
 Love's own,—still blessed by Heaven's dew;
 And though all earth weeps
 That the Blossom sleeps,
I know it lives somewhere, with God—and You!

FEATHERS AND FLIGHT

Frail blooms still sentient on the swaying stem;
 Dear hands that planted there,
Forever folded! Life athrob with them
 So close; with thee the hush of endless prayer—
 Where, dear love, where?

Lo, here a fluttering feather fallen prone;
 Somewhere a winging bird
Afar to pristine heights of blue hath flown:
 The feather by each breath of mine is stirred,—
 The song—unheard!

THE DIM BETWEEN

Where'er thou art, where'er I bide;—
Thou here, I across the Great Divide;—
My hand shall reach till thine be met,
In life or death;—do not forget!
For in the dim Between—alone—
I'll watch, where Love doth wait its Own!

If I be left, thou gone before;
My only path to Heaven's door
Shall be thy way,—below, above,—
Content 'tis thine;—remember, love!
For in that blest Between, 'tis known—
God grants this boon;—Love finds its Own!

So if my soul be tried by fire,
While thine doth climb; I'll strive, nor tire;
But welcome pain and deem it bliss
If I be purged:—remember this!
Until—Between—more worthy grown,
I'll meet thee;—where Love claims its Own!

THE TIDES

Ebb-tide;—and a dreary waste of sand,
Dank seaweed along the shore;
Each wave as it slips from the gleaming strand
Sobs this sad strain:—“All hope is o'er!—
I chant of the waves that come no more.”

Flood-tide;—and each wave that higher creeps
From the blue, unfathomed sea,
Lilts this refrain as it lightly leaps:—
“Hope on!—there's a richer joy to be;
I sing of the waves that follow me.”

ASLEEP

You have fallen asleep, and I kiss you
 On lips and on brow;
I grope in the darkness, and miss you—
 As but Love knows how.
'Tis strange death should give you this seeming
 Of sleep after strife,
When I know you've just waked from
 your dreaming—
 To fullness of Life.
I look on your eyes sealed forever;—
 For the first do they see.
Has the hand that just now seemed to sever,
 But joined you to me?
You prayed for Life,—Love; has God
 crossed you,
 Lying dead and alone?
Can it be, when it seems I have lost you,
 You are closer—my own?
Men call waking, sleep; and Life, dying,—
 Reverse the Divine;
Thus 'tis I who am sleeping—and sighing;
 You are living—and mine!
The truth your calm face is adorning;
 So I kiss you Good Night,—
To dream on and await your Good Morning—
 When cometh my Light.

ECHO

Each night when my spirit grows lonely,
I go out 'neath the infinite stars
And call from my soul—to you only;
Then listen: and lo, Heaven's portal unbars;

And out of the Silence Appalling,
From your lips that so long have been dumb,
"Come back to me! ay, come!" I'm calling;
There rings back the blessed assurance,—“I come!”

Then, thrilled to my being, enraptured,
I call,—“Where are you? Do you hear?”
And the soul of you, free and uncaptured,
Speaks out of Life's Unfathomed Mystery,—
“Here!”

“O Dear Heart, I love you!” soars ringing;
Then, pure as the morning's own dew,
Your answer comes tenderly winging
From the vastness of God's blest Somewhere, —
“I love you!”

“Will I lose you so far up in Heaven,
As below I wait?” then—blessed Fate!—
The skies by your promise are riven
As the Great Unknown sends back your vow,—
“Lo, I wait!”

Men jeer me and say I am mooning,
Calling you but an echo,—yet lo,
My soul with your soul seems communing:
“Are they right,—do they know?” And your
answer comes,—“No!”

NOBLY BORN

If,—when men fancy wealth an earthly thing,
And scorn thee, call thee poor,—
Thou knowest thou art rich—heir of a King—
With Gold that shall endure;
If thou canst smile—when spurned, and flayed by lies,
While Reputation flees,
And joy in Character that never dies,—
The only thing God sees;
If,—when men call thee fool, and jibe—forsooth,—
Thou canst rest well content
In understanding Life's exalted Truth,—
And be the Man God meant;
If thou canst make thy attic—Heaven's gate;
White robes—thy garments worn:—
Then, though men rate thee clay—of low estate,
God marks thee—Nobly Born!

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW

Whate'er of sunshine cheers thy way,
In May or bleak December,
Store up each brightly golden ray:—
Remember!

Whate'er of shadow comes to thee,—
E'en whilst thou dost regret it,—
Imprison it and lose the key:—
Forget it!



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