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NANTUCKET

And Other Verses

BY

MARY STARBUCK

Mary Starbuck
Islander.

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By

Mary Starbuck

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NANTUCKET

“Just a sandy wind-swept island!”
What more would you have it be,
With a turquoise sky above it,
Around it a sapphire sea?

When its dawns are pearl and opal,
Its noons are crystals clear,
And its sunsets shower down gold dust
Till the diamond stars appear,—

When to those who are born on the island,
And to many from over the sea,
'Tis fairer than all its jewels,
What more does it need to be?

INLAND

I DREAM of the east wind's tonic,
Of the breakers' stormy roar,
And the peace of the inner harbor
With the long, low Shimmo Shore.

I want to sail down from Wauwinet
As the sun drops low in the west,
And the town, like a city celestial,
Looks a fitting abode for the blest.

I long for the buoy-bell's tolling
When the north wind brings from afar
The smooth, green, shining billows
To be churned into foam on the bar.

Oh for the sea-gulls' screaming
As they swoop so bold and free!
Oh for the fragrant commons,
And the glorious open sea!

For the restful great contentment,
For the joy that is never known
Till past the jetty and Brant Point Light
The Islander comes to his own!

EXPERIENCE

I

YELLOW gorse and purple heather,
Sunrise splendor on the sea,
Glory of the autumn morning,
Life is joy to you and me.

Yellow gorse and purple heather
Where the moorland meets the 'sea,
God is good and life is loving,
And His world holds you and me.

II

Cold gray mist veils all the moorland,
Low the sob of the grieving sea,
Great gray world of utter blankness,
And the lonely heart of me.

Faint, blind, groping through the grayness,
Drawn by the call of the hidden sea,
Lonely heart all numb with sorrow,
Life is naught but mystery.

III

Yellow gorse and purple heather,
Sunset crimson on the sea,
Mighty tides are flowing ever,
Life and love and mystery.

Yellow gorse and purple heather,
Sunset splendor on the sea,
God is good and life is loving,
Still His world holds you and me.

ISLAND SPRING SONG

DOWN the sound the ice drifts seaward,
Blue and free the tossing bay,
And the pale gold shivering shallows
Whisper, "Spring is on the way."

ON the bleak and wind-swept upland
Rusty pine trees creak and sway,
And it's greening in the hollows,
For the spring is on the way.

DENIAL

WHEN thou camest to my door,
Blithesome prince, of welcome sure,
I did send thee back again
Into darkness and the rain,
Because I loved thee so.

Thou didst beg with me to stay.
Hard it was to say thee nay,
Send thee pleading from my sight,
Urge thee, halting, up the height,
Because I loved thee so.

Know'st thou not I share thy pain,
Long to draw thee back again?—
Thou art meant a king to be,
Never prince shall bide with me,
Because I love thee so.

Thou must fight and thou must win,
To thy kingdom enter in.
By the dangers and the strife
Learn the meaning of thy life,
Because I love thee so.

Then a king, though battered sore,
If again thou seek'st my door,
Door and heart alike shall be
Open wide to welcome thee,
Because I love thee so.

THE PATH

“WHERE does the path lead over the hill,
The hill that looms to the west?”

“It leads to labor and striving and joy,
And then it leads to rest.”

“Where does the path lead over the hill,
The path that is winding and steep?”

“It leads to sorrow and weary loss,
And then it leads to sleep.”

“Where does the path lead over the hill
When at last its windings cease?”

“It leads to life and it leads to love,
And at last it leads to peace.”

THE PURPLE ISLAND

PURPLE Island! Purple Island!

There are mystic moments when
All the voices of the springtime
Call us o'er and o'er again

Back to thee, far purple island,
Where the slow tides rise and fall,
And the spirit slips its moorings
When in spring the voices call.

All the weary ache of longing
Born of absence fades away.
We can see the white sails winging
Homeward at the close of day,

And beyond, the silver harbor
And the gray roofs of the town;
And the tender purple shadows
Of the night come drifting down.

Soft the air and full of fragrance,
Breath of sweet-fern, breath of pine,
Pungent odor of the cedars,
Bayberry and wild grape-vine.

Tranquil miles of open moorland
Once again before us lie,
Once again the crooning ocean
Soothes us with its lullaby.

And the old spell falls upon us
As the stars shine out above,
And thy peace enfolds us wholly,
Purple island of our love.

THE WINDS

THE north wind brought a soul to the earth,
The east wind called him to roam,
The south wind lured him and tried his strength,
And teased him and wearied him, till at length
The west wind wafted him home.

SUBMISSION

I WAS not of Thy fold, dear Lord,
 But one astray;
I longed to come if only I
 Could find the way;
Blind from my birth, all dark to me
 The light of day.

By faith I walked, with stumblings oft,
 Or grievous fall;
Somewhere, somehow I knew that I
 Should hear Thy call;
Now at Thy feet I lay my heart,
 It is my all.

Upon my eyes place Thy cool palm,
O Saviour mine.
I cannot see Thee, but I feel
Thy touch divine
Assuage my fever and my hurt
With peace of Thine.

Shall I grow now, with Thee to hold
My tired hands,
Into that strength for others' needs
Love understands?
I will not ask, but patient wait
For Love's commands.

TRINITY

THE mists rise out of the sea,
The clouds drift back o'er the land
To the curving hills and the boulders bare
And the plains of shining sand.

In the fulness of time hidden streams
Come forth in a river free,
A life-giving river of mighty power,
Flowing down to the infinite sea.

“I and my Father are one,” said the Christ,
“To Him I return, my work is done.”—
Mist and river and infinite sea,
The source and the course and the goal are one.

A MEMORY

A LOW gray sky, a purple moor,
A sullen surf, a beaten shore,
A glint of gold at the far sea-line,
A glimpse of Heaven—your hand in mine.

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