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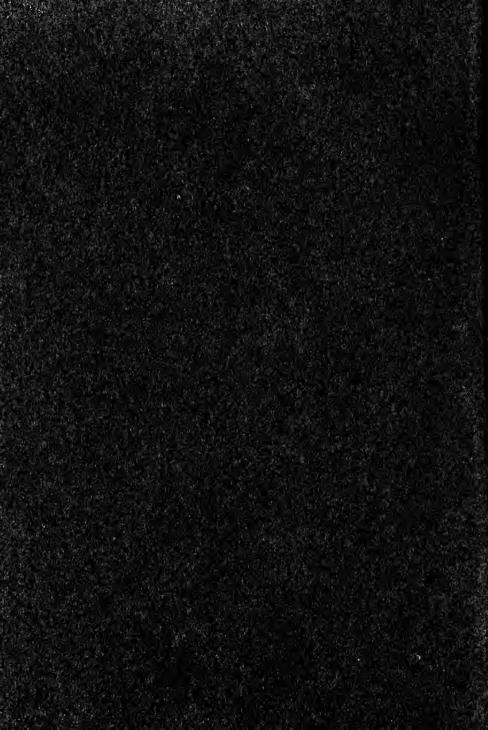
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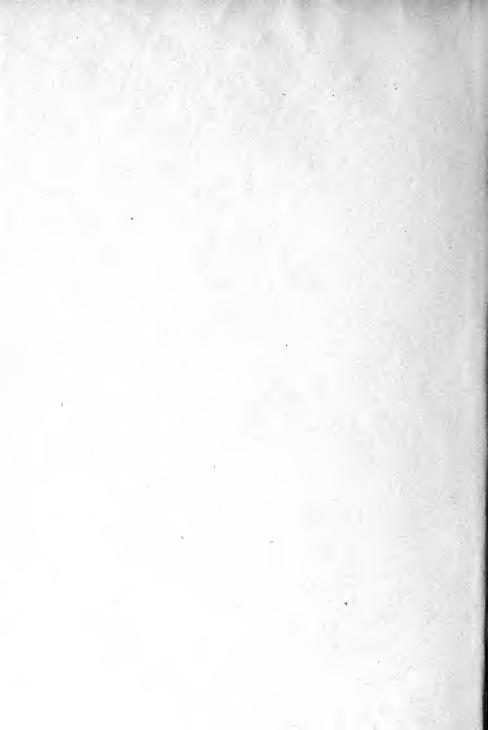
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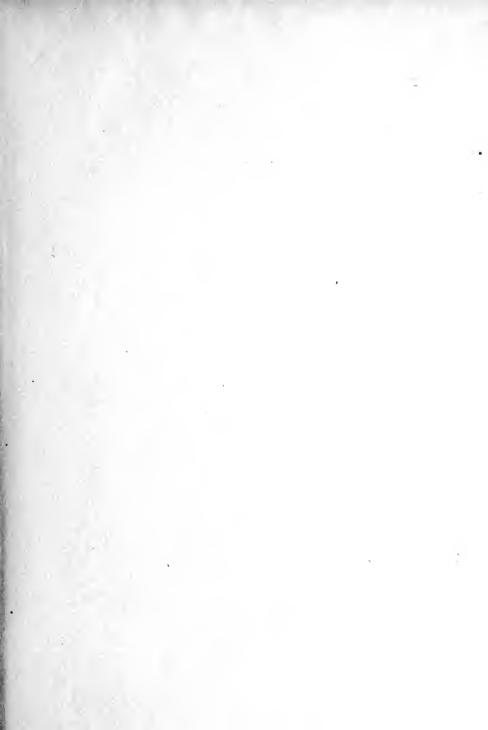
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### A SELECTION FROM THE LOVE POETRY OF WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



THE CUALA PRESS
CHURCHTOWN
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# VEHICL CLAIN A LINE TO PARTY A



THE LAIN VILLSER OF CHARLES OF CH

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THE PITY OF LOVE

A pity beyond all telling
Is hid in the heart of love:
The folk who are buying and selling;
The clouds on their journey above;
The cold wet winds ever blowing;
And the shadowy hazel grove
Where mouse-grey waters are flowing
Threaten the head that I love.

#### THE ROSE OF BATTLE

Rose of all Roses, Rose of all the world!
The tall thought-woven sails, that flap unfurled Above the tide of hours, trouble the air,
And God's bell buoyed to be the water's care;
While hushed from fear, or loud with hope, a band With blown, spray-dabbled hair gather at hand.
Turn if you may from battles never done,
I call, as they go by me one by one,
Danger no refuge holds, and war no peace,
For him who hears love sing and never cease,
Beside her clean-swept hearth, her quiet shade:
But gather all for whom no love hath made
A woven silence, or but came to cast
A song into the air, and singing past
To smile on the pale dawn; and gather you

Who have sought more than is in rain or dew Or in the sun and moon, or on the earth, Or sighs amid the wandering, starry mirth, Or comes in laughter from the sea's sad lips; And wage God's battles in the long gray ships. The sad, the lonely, the insatiable, To these Old Night shall all her mystery tell; God's bell has claimed them by the little cry Of their sad hearts, that may not live nor die. Rose of all Roses, Rose of all the World! You, too, have come where the dim tides are hurled Upon the wharves of sorrow, and heard ring The bell that calls us on; the sweet far thing. Beauty grown sad with its eternity Made you of us, and of the dim gray sea. Our long ships loose thought-woven sails and wait, For God has bid them share an equal fate; And when at last defeated in His wars, They have gone down under the same white stars, We shall no longer hear the little cry Of our sad hearts, that may not live nor die.

#### WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and gray and full of sleep, And nodding by the fire, take down this book, And slowly read, and dream of the soft look Your eyes had once and of their shadows deep; How many loved your moments of glad grace, And loved your beauty with love false or true; But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you, And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled And paced upon the mountains overhead And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

### THE ROSE OF THE WORLD

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream? For these red lips, with all their mournful pride, Mournful that no new wonder may betide, Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam, And Usna's children died.

We and the labouring world are passing by: Amid men's souls, that waver and give place Like the pale waters in their wintry race, Under the passing stars, foam of the sky, Lives on this lonely face.

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode: Before you were, or any hearts to beat, Weary and kind one lingered by His seat; He made the world to be a grassy road Before her wandering feet. THE WIND AMONG THE REEDS 1892-1897

THE LOVER TELLS OF THE ROSE IN HIS HEART All things uncomely and broken, all things worn and old, The cry of a child by the roadway, the creak of a lumbering cart, The heavy steps of the ploughman, splashing the wintry mould, Are wronging your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of my heart.

The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be told; I hunger to build them anew and sit on a green knoll apart, With the earth and the sky and the water, remade, like a casket of gold

For my dreams of your image that blossoms a rose in the deeps of

my heart.

THE LOVER MOURNS FOR
THE LOSS OF LOVE
Pale brows, still hands and dim hair,
I had a beautiful friend
And dreamed that the old despair
Would end in love in the end:
She looked in my heart one day
And saw your image was there;
She has gone weeping away.

HE MOURNS FOR THE CHANGE THAT HAS COME UPON HIM AND HIS BELOVED AND LONGS FOR THE END OF THE WORLD Do you not hear me calling, white deer with no horns! I have been changed to a hound with one red ear; I have been in the Path of Stones and the Wood of Thorns, For somebody hid hatred and hope and desire and fear Under my feet that they follow you night and day. A man with a hazel wand came without sound; He changed me suddenly; I was looking another way; And now my calling is but the calling of a hound; And Time and Birth and Change are hurrying by. I would that the Boar without bristles had come from the West And had rooted the sun and moon and stars out of the sky

HE TELLS OF A VALLEY FULL OF LOVERS
I dreamed that I stood in a valley, and amid sighs,
For happy lovers passed two by two where I stood;
And I dreamed my lost love came stealthily out of the wood
With her cloud-pale eyelids falling on dream-dimmed eyes:
I cried in my dream, O women, bid the young men lay
Their heads on your knees, and drown their eyes with your hair,
Or remembering hers they will find no other face fair
Till all the valleys of the world have been withered away.

And lay in the darkness, grunting, and turning to his rest.

### HE REMEMBERS FORGOTTEN BEAUTY

When my arms wrap you round I press My heart upon the loveliness That has long faded from the world; The jewelled crowns that kings have hurled In shadowy pools, when armies fled; The love-tales wrought with silken thread By dreaming ladies upon cloth That has made fat the murderous moth; The roses that of old time were Woven by ladies in their hair, The dew-cold lilies ladies bore Through many a sacred corridor Where such gray clouds of incense rose That only the gods' eyes did not close: For that pale breast and lingering hand Come from a more dream-heavy land, A more dream-heavy hour than this; And when you sigh from kiss to kiss I hear white Beauty sighing, too, For hours when all must fade like dew. All but the flames, and deep on deep, Throne over throne where in half sleep, Their swords upon their iron knees, Brood her high lonely mysteries

HE BIDS HIS BELOVED BE AT PEACE

I hear the Shadowy Horses, their long manes a-shake,
Their hoofs heavy with tumult, their eyes glimmering white;
The North unfolds above them clinging, creeping night,
The East her hidden joy before the morning break,
The West weeps in pale dew and sighs passing away,
The South is pouring down roses of crimson fire:
O vanity of Sleep, Hope, Dream, endless Desire,
The Horses of Disaster plunge in the heavy clay:
Beloved, let your eyes half close, and your heart beat
Over my heart, and your hair fall over my breast,
Drowning love's lonely hour in deep twilight of rest,
And hiding their tossing manes and their tumultuous feet.

### HE GIVES HIS BELOVED CERTAIN RHYMES

Fasten your hair with a golden pin, And bind up every wandering tress; I bade my heart build these poor rhymes: It worked at them, day out, day in, Building a sorrowful loveliness Out of the battles of old times.

You need but lift a pearl-pale hand, And bind up your long hair and sigh; And all men's hearts must burn and beat; And candle-like foam on the dim sand, And stars climbing the dew-dropping sky, Live but to light your passing feet. HE TELLS OF THE PERFECT BEAUTY

O cloud-pale eyelids, dream-dimmed eyes,
The poets labouring all their days
To build a perfect beauty in rhyme
Are overthrown by a woman's gaze
And by the unlabouring brood of the skies:
And therefore my heart will bow, when dew
Is dropping sleep, until God burn time,
Before the unlabouring stars and you.

HE REPROVES THE CURLEW

O, curlew, cry no more in the air,
Or only to the waters in the West;
Because your crying brings to my mind
Passion-dimmed eyes and long heavy hair
That was shaken out over my breast:
There is enough evil in the crying of wind.

### THE TRAVAIL OF PASSION

When the flaming lute-thronged angelic door is wide; When an immortal passion breathes in mortal clay; Our hearts endure the scourge, the plaited thorns, the way Crowded with bitter faces, the wounds in palm and side, The hyssop-heavy sponge, the flowers by Kidron stream. We will bend down and loosen our hair over you, That it may drop faint perfume, and be heavy with dew, Lilies of death-pale hope, roses of passionate dream. THE LOVER ASKS FORGIVENESS BECAUSE OF HIS MANY MOODS If this importunate heart trouble your peace With words lighter than air, Or hopes that in mere hoping flicker and cease; Crumple the rose in your hair; And cover your lips with odorous twilight and say, 'O hearts of wind-blown flame! O Winds, elder than changing of night and day, That murmuring and longing came From marble cities loud with tabors of old In dove-gray faery lands; From battle banners, fold upon purple fold, Queens wrought with glimmering hands; That saw young Niamh hover with love-lorn face Above the wandering tide; And lingered in the hidden desolate place Where the last Phænix died, And wrapped the flames above his holy head; And still murmur and long: O Piteous Hearts, changing till change be dead In a tumultuous song:' And cover the pale blossoms of your breast With your dim heavy hair, And trouble with a sigh for all things longing for rest The odorous twilight there.

### THE LOVER PLEADS WITH HIS FRIEND FOR OLD FRIENDS

Though you are in your shining days,
Voices among the crowd
And new friends busy with your praise,
Be not unkind or proud,
But think about old friends the most:
Time's bitter flood will rise,
Your beauty perish and be lost
For all eyes but these eyes.

### HE WISHES HIS BELOVED WERE DEAD

Were you but lying cold and dead,
And lights were paling out of the West,
You would come hither, and bend your head,
And I would lay my head on your breast;
And you would murmur tender words,
Forgiving me, because you were dead:
Nor would you rise and hasten away,
Though you have the will of the wild birds,
But know your hair was bound and wound
Above the stars and moon and sun:
O would, beloved, that you lay
Under the dock-leaves in the ground,
While lights were paling one by one.

#### A POET TO HIS BELOVED

I bring you with reverent hands
The books of my numberless dreams;
White woman that passion has worn
As the tide wears the dove-gray sands,
And with heart more old than the horn
That is brimmed from the pale fire of time:
White woman with numberless dreams
I bring you my passionate rhyme.

### HE WISHES FOR THE CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths, Enwrought with golden and silver light, The blue and the dim and the dark cloths Of night and light and the half light, I would spread the cloths under your feet: But I, being poor, have only my dreams; I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly because you tread on my dreams. IN THE SEVEN WOODS 1897-1904

### ADAM'S CURSE

We sat together at one summer's end, That beautiful mild woman, your close friend, And you and I, and talked of poetry.

I said: 'A line will take us hours maybe;
Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.
Better go down upon your marrow-bones
And scrub a kitchen pavement, or break stones
Like an old pauper, in all kinds of weather;
For to articulate sweet sounds together
Is to work harder than all these, and yet
Be thought an idler by the noisy set
Of bankers, schoolmasters, and clergymen
The martyrs call the world.'

That woman then
Murmured with her young voice, for whose mild
sake

There's many a one shall find out all heartache In finding that it's young and mild and low: 'There is one thing that all we women know, Although we never heard of it at school— That we must labour to be beautiful.' I said: 'It's certain there is no fine thing
Since Adam's fall but needs much labouring.
There have been lovers who thought love should be
So much compounded of high courtesy
That they would sigh and quote with learned looks
Precedents out of beautiful old books;
Yet now it seems an idle trade enough.'

We sat grown quiet at the name of love; We saw the last embers of daylight die, And in the trembling blue-green of the sky A moon, worn as if it had been a shell Washed by time's waters as they rose and fell About the stars and broke in days and years.

I had a thought for no one's but your ears; That you were beautiful, and that I strove To love you in the old high way of love; That it had all seemed happy, and yet we'd grown As weary-hearted as that hollow moon.

### THE FOLLY OF BEING COMFORTED

One that is ever kind said yesterday:
'Your well-beloved's hair has threads of grey,
And little shadows come about her eyes;
Time can but make it easier to be wise,
Though now it's hard, till trouble is at an end;

And so be patient, be wise and patient, friend.'
But, heart, there is no comfort, not a grain;
Time can but make her beauty over again.
Because of that great nobleness of hers
The fire that stirs about her when she stirs
Burns but more clearly. O she had not these ways,
When all the wild summer was in her gaze.
O heart! O heart! if she'd but turn her head,
You'd know the folly of being comforted.

### **OLD MEMORY**

Thought fly to her when the end of day
Awakens an old memory, and say,
'Your strength, that is so lofty and fierce and kind,
It might call up a new age, calling to mind
The queens that were imagined long ago,
Is but half yours: he kneaded in the dough
Through the long years of youth, and who would have thought
It all, and more than it all, would come to naught,
And that dear words meant nothing?' But enough,
For when we have blamed the wind we can blame love;
Or, if there needs be more, be nothing said
That would be harsh for children that have strayed.

#### UNDER THE MOON

I have no happiness in dreaming of Brycelinde, Nor Avalon the grass-green hollow, nor Joyous Isle, Where one found Lancelot crazed and hid him for a while; Nor Ulad, when Naoise had thrown a sail upon the wind, Nor lands that seem too dim to be burdens on the heart; Land-under-Wave, where out of the moon's light and the sun's Seven old sisters wind the threads of the long-lived ones; Land-of-the-Tower, where Aengus has thrown the gates apart, And Wood-of-Wonders, where one kills an ox at dawn, To find it when night falls laid on a golden bier: Therein are many queens like Branwen and Guinivere; And Niamh and Laban and Fand, who could change to an otter or fawn,

And the wood-woman, whose lover was changed to a blue-eyed hawk:

And whether I go in my dreams by woodland, or dun, or shore, Or on the unpeopled waves with kings to pull at the oar, I hear the harp-string praise them, or hear their mournful talk. Because of a story I heard under the thin horn Of the third moon, that hung between the night and the day, To dream of women whose beauty was folded in dismay, Even in an old story, is a burden not to be borne.

### BAILE AND AILLINN

Argument. Baile and Aillinn were lovers, but Aengus, the Master of Love, wishing them to be happy in his own land among the dead, told to each a story of the other's death, so that their hearts were broken and they died.

I hardly hear the curlew cry,
Nor the grey rush when wind is high,
Before my thoughts begin to run
On the heir of Ulad, Buan's son,
Baile who had the honey mouth,
And that mild woman of the south,
Aillinn, who was King Lugaid's heir.
Their love was never drowned in care
Of this or that thing, nor grew cold
Because their bodies had grown old;
Being forbid to marry on earth
They blossomed to immortal mirth.

About the time when Christ was born, When the long wars for the White Horn And the Brown Bull had not yet come, Young Baile Honey-Mouth, whom some Called rather Baile Little-Land, Rode out of Emain with a band Of harpers and young men, and they Imagined, as they struck the way To many pastured Muirthemne, That all things fell out happily And there, for all that fools had said, Baile and Aillinn would be wed.

They found an old man running there, He had ragged long grass-yellow hair;

He had knees that stuck out of his hose; He had puddle water in his shoes; He had half a cloak to keep him dry; Although he had a squirrel's eye. O wandering birds and rushy beds, You put such folly in our heads With all this crying in the wind No common love is to our mind, And our poor Kate or Nan is less Than any whose unhappiness Awoke the harp strings long ago. Yet they that know all things but know That all life had to give us is A child's laughter, a woman's kiss. Who was it put so great a scorn In the grey reeds that night and morn Are trodden and broken by the herds, And in the light bodies of birds That north wind tumbles to and fro And pinches among hail and snow?

That runner said 'I am from the south; I run to Baile Honey-Mouth
To tell him how the girl Aillinn
Rode from the country of her kin
And old and young men rode with her:
For all that country had been astir

d

If anybody half as fair
Had chosen a husband anywhere
But where it could see her every day.
When they had ridden a little way
An old man caught the horse's head
With 'You must home again and wed
With somebody in your own land.'
A young man cried and kissed her hand
'O lady, wed with one of us;'
And when no face grew piteous
For any gentle thing she spake
She fell and died of the heart-break.'

Because a lover's heart's worn out
Being tumbled and blown about
By its own blind imagining,
And will believe that anything
That is bad enough to be true, is true,
Baile's heart was broken in two;
And he being laid upon green boughs
Was carried to the goodly house
Where the hound of Ulad sat before
The brazen pillars of his door;
His face bowed low to weep the end
Of the harper's daughter and her friend;
For although years had passed away
He always wept them on that day,

For on that day they had been betrayed; And now that Honey-Mouth is laid Under a cairn of sleepy stone Before his eyes, he has tears for none, Although he is carrying stone, but two For whom the cairn's but heaped anew.

We hold because our memory is
So full of that thing and of this
That out of sight is out of mind.
But the grey rush under the wind
And the grey bird with crooked bill
Have such long memories that they still
Remember Deirdre and her man,
And when we walk with Kate or Nan
About the windy water side
Our heart can hear the voices chide.
How could we be so soon content
Who know the way that Naoise went?
And they have news of Deirdre's eyes
Who being lovely was so wise,
Ah wise, my heart knows well how wise.

Now had that old gaunt crafty one, Gathering his cloak about him, run Where Aillinn rode with waiting maids Who amid leafy lights and shades Dreamed of the hands that would unlace Their bodices in some dim place When they had come to the marriage bed; And harpers pondering with bowed head A music that had thought enough Of the ebb of all things to make love Grow gentle without sorrowings; And leather-coated men with slings Who peered about on every side; And amid leafy light he cried, 'He is well out of wind and wave, They have heaped the stones above his grave In Muirthemne and over it In changeless Ogham letters writ Baile that was of Rury's seed. But the gods long ago decreed No waiting maid should ever spread Baile and Aillinn's marriage bed, For they should clip and clip again Where wild bees hive on the Great Plain. Therefore it is but little news That put this hurry in my shoes.'

And hurrying to the south he came
To that high hill the herdsmen name
The Hill Seat of Leighin, because
Some god or king had made the laws

That held the land together there, In old times among the clouds of the air.

That old man climbed; the day grew dim;
Two swans came flying up to him
Linked by a gold chain each to each
And with low murmuring laughing speech
Alighted on the windy grass.
They knew him: his changed body was
Tall, proud and ruddy, and light wings
Were hovering over the harp strings
That Etain, Midhir's wife, had wove
In the hid place, being crazed by love.

What shall I call them? fish that swim Scale rubbing scale where light is dim By a broad water-lily leaf;
Or mice in the one wheaten sheaf
Forgotten at the threshing place;
Or birds lost in the one clear space
Of morning light in a dim sky;
Or it may be, the eyelids of one eye
Or the door pillars of one house,
Or two sweet blossoming apple boughs
That have one shadow on the ground;
Or the two strings that made one sound
Where that wise harper's finger ran;

For this young girl and this young man
Have happiness without an end
Because they have made so good a friend.
They know all wonders, for they pass
The towery gates of Gorias
And Findrias and Falias
And long-forgotten Murias,
Among the giant kings whose hoard
Cauldron and spear and stone and sword
Was robbed before Earth gave the wheat;
Wandering from broken street to street
They come where some huge watcher is
And tremble with their love and kiss,

They know undying things, for they
Wander where earth withers away,
Though nothing troubles the great streams
But light from the pale stars, and gleams
From the holy orchards, where there is none
But fruit that is of precious stone,
Or apples of the sun and moon.

What were our praise to them: they eat Quiet's wild heart, like daily meat, Who when night thickens are afloat On dappled skins in a glass boat Far out under a windless sky, While over them birds of Aengus fly, And over the tiller and the prow And waving white wings to and fro Awaken wanderings of light air To stir their coverlet and their hair.

And poets found, old writers say,
A yew tree where his body lay,
But a wild apple hid the grass
With its sweet blossom where hers was;
And being in good heart, because
A better time had come again
After the deaths of many men,
And that long fighting at the ford,
They wrote on tablets of thin board,
Made of the apple and the yew,
All the love stories that they knew.

Let rush and bird cry out their fill
Of the harper's daughter if they will,
Beloved, I am not afraid of her
She is not wiser nor lovelier,
And you are more high of heart than she
For all her wanderings over-sea;
But I'd have bird and rush forget
Those other two, for never yet
Has lover lived but longed to wive
Like them that are no more alive.

# THE GREEN HELMET

1904-1911

### THE MASK

'Put off that mask of burning gold With emerald eyes.'
'O no, my dear, you make so bold To find if hearts be wild and wise, And yet not cold.'

'I would but find what's there to find, Love or deceit.'
'It was the mask engaged your mind, And after set your heart to beat, Not what's behind.'

'But lest you are my enemy, I must enquire.'
'O no, my dear, let all that be, What matter, so there is but fire In you, in me?'

#### HIS DREAM

I swayed upon the gaudy stern The butt end of a steering oar, And everywhere that I could turn Men ran upon the shore. And though I would have hushed the crowd There was no mother's son but said, 'What is the figure in a shroud Upon a gaudy bed?'

And fishes bubbling to the brim Cried out upon that thing beneath, It had such dignity of limb, By the sweet name of Death.

Though I'd my finger on my lip, What could I but take up the song? And fish and crowd and gaudy ship Cried out the whole night long,

Crying amid the glittering sea, Naming it with ecstatic breath, Because it had such dignity By the sweet name of Death.

# A WOMAN HOMER SUNG

If any man drew near
When I was young,
I thought, 'He holds her dear,'
And shook with hate and fear.
But oh, 't was bitter wrong
If he could pass her by
With an indifferent eye.

Whereon I wrote and wrought, And now, being gray, I dream that I have brought To such a pitch my thought That coming time can say, 'He shadowed in a glass What thing her body was.'

For she had fiery blood When I was young, And trod so sweetly proud As 't were upon a cloud, A woman Homer sung, That life and letters seem But an heroic dream.

## PEACE

Ah, but Time has touched a form
That could show what Homer's age
Bred to be a hero's wage.
'Were not all her life but storm,
Would not painters paint a form
Of such noble lines' I said.
'Such a delicate high head,
So much sternness and such charm,
Till they had changed us to like strength?'
Ah, but peace that comes at length,
Came when Time had touched her form.

Limit I filding as fly?

### THE CONSOLATION

I had this thought awhile ago,
'My darling cannot understand
What I have done, or what would do
In this blind bitter land.'

And I grew weary of the sun Until my thoughts cleared up again, Remembering that the best I have done Was done to make it plain;

That every year I have cried, 'At length My darling understands it all, Because I have come into my strength, And words obey my call.'

That had she done so who can say
What would have shaken from the sieve?
I might have thrown poor words away
And been content to live.

## NO SECOND TROY

Why should I blame her that she filled my days
With misery, or that she would of late
Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways,
Or hurled the little streets upon the great,

Had they but courage equal to desire?
What could have made her peaceful with a mind
That nobleness made simple as a fire,
With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
That is not natural in an age like this,
Being high and solitary and most stern?
Why, what could she have done being what she is?
Was there another Troy for her to burn?

## RECONCILIATION

Some may have blamed you that you took away
The verses that could move them on the day
When, the ears being deafened, the sight of the eyes blind
With lightning you went from me, and I could find
Nothing to make a song about but kings,
Helmets, and swords, and half-forgotten things
That were like memories of you—but now
We'll out, for the world lives as long ago;
And while we're in our laughing, weeping fit,
Hurl helmets, crowns, and swords into the pit.
But, dear, cling close to me; since you were gone,
My barren thoughts have chilled me to the bone.

#### KING AND NO KING

'Would it were anything but merely voice!'
The No King cried who after that was King,
Because he had not heard of anything
That balanced with a word is more than noise;

Yet Old Romance being kind, let him prevail
Somewhere or somehow that I have forgot,
Though he'd but cannon— Whereas we that had thought
To have lit upon as clean and sweet a tale
Have been defeated by that pledge you gave
In momentary anger long ago;
And I that have not your faith, how shall I know
That in the blinding light beyond the grave
We'll find so good a thing as that we have lost?
The hourly kindness, the day's common speech,
The habitual content of each with each
When neither soul nor body has been crossed.

#### AGAINST UNWORTHY PRAISE

O heart, be at peace, because
Nor knave nor dolt can break
What's not for their applause,
Being for a woman's sake.
Enough if the work has seemed,
So did she your strength renew,
A dream that a lion had dreamed
Till the wilderness cried aloud,
A secret between you two,
Between the proud and the proud.

What, still you would have their praise! But here's a haughtier text,

The labyrinth of her days
That her own strangeness perplexed;
And how what her dreaming gave
Earned slander, ingratitude,
From self-same dolt and knave;
Aye, and worse wrong than these.
Yet she, singing upon her road,
Half lion, half child, is at peace.

Here ends 'A Selection from the Love
Poetry of William Butler Yeats 18901911.' Printed and published by Elizabeth C. Yeats at The Cuala Press,
Churchtown, Dundrum, in the
County of Dublin, Ireland.
Finished in the last week of
May, in the year nineteen hundred and
thirteen.

