

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Francis William Bourdillon**

**- poems -**

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## **A Violinist**

THE LARK above our heads doth know  
A heaven we see not here below;  
She sees it, and for joy she sings;  
Then falls with ineffectual wings.

Ah, soaring soul! faint not nor tire!  
Each heaven attained reveals a higher.  
Thy thought is of thy failure; we  
List raptured, and thank God for thee.

Francis William Bourdillon

## **Eurydice**

HE came to call me back from death  
To the bright world above.  
I hear him yet with trembling breath  
Low calling, "O sweet love!  
Come back! The earth is just as fair;  
The flowers, the open skies are there;  
Come back to life and love!"

Oh! all my heart went out to him,  
And the sweet air above.  
With happy tears my eyes were dim;  
I called him, "O sweet love!  
I come, for thou art all to me.  
Go forth, and I will follow thee,  
Right back to life and love!"

I followed through the cavern black;  
I saw the blue above.  
Some terror turned me to look back:  
I heard him wail, "O love!  
What hast thou done! What hast thou done!"  
And then I saw no more the sun,  
And lost were life and love.

Francis William Bourdillon

## **Night**

The night has a thousand eyes,  
And the day but one;  
Yet the light of the bright world dies  
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,  
And the heart but one;  
Yet the light of a whole life dies,  
When love is done.

Francis William Bourdillon

## Old And Young

LONG ago, on a bright spring day,  
I passed a little child at play;  
And as I passed, in childish glee  
She called to me, "Come and play with me!"

But my eyes were fixed on a far-off height  
I was fain to climb before the night;  
So, half-impatient, I answered, "Nay!  
I am too old, too old to play."

Long, long after, in Autumn time—  
My limbs were grown too old to climb—  
I passed a child on a pleasant lea,  
And I called to her, "Come and play with me!"

But her eyes were fixed on a fairy-book;  
And scarce she lifted a wondering look,  
As with childish scorn she answered, "Nay!  
I am too old, too old to play!"

Francis William Bourdillon

## **On the South Downs**

Light falls the rain  
On link and laine,  
After the burning day;  
And the bright scene,  
Blue, gold, and green,  
Is blotted out in gray.

Not so will part  
The glowing heart  
With sunny hours gone by;  
On cliff and hill  
There lingers still  
A light that cannot die.

Like a gold crown  
Gorse decks the Down,  
All sapphire lies the sea;  
And incense sweet  
Springs as our feet  
Tread light the thymy lea.

Fade, vision bright!  
Fall rain, fall night!  
Forget, gray world, thy green!  
For us, nor thee,  
Can all days be  
As though this had not been!

Francis William Bourdillon

## **The Chantry of the Cherubim**

Hi There! I see you're enjoying the site, and just wanted to extend an invitation to register for our free site. The members of oldpoetry strive to make this a fun place to learn and share - hope you join us! - Kevin

Francis William Bourdillon

## **The Debt Unpayable**

What have I given,  
Bold sailor on the sea?  
In earth or heaven,  
That you should die for me?

What can I give,  
O soldier, leal and brave,  
Long as I live,  
To pay the life you gave?

What tithe or part  
Can I return to thee,  
O stricken heart,  
That thou shouldst break for me?

The wind of Death  
For you has slain life's flowers,  
It withereth  
(God grant) all weeds in ours.

Francis William Bourdillon