

Classic Poetry Series

Harold Monro

- poems -

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Child of Dawn

O gentle vision in the dawn:
My spirit over faint cool water glides,
Child of the day,
To thee;
And thou art drawn
By kindred impulse over silver tides
The dreamy way
To me.

I need thy hands, O gentle wonder-child,
For they are moulded unto all repose;
Thy lips are frail,
And thou art cooler than an April rose;
White are thy words and mild:
Child of the morning, hail!

Breathe thus upon mine eyelids -- that we twain
May build the day together out of dreams.
Life, with thy breath upon my eyelids, seems
Exquisite to the utmost bounds of pain.
I cannot live, except as I may be
Compelled for love of thee.
O let us drift,
Frail as the floating silver of a star,
Or like the summer humming of a bee,
Or stream-reflected sunlight through a rift.

I will not hope, because I know, alas,
Morning will glide, and noon, and then the night
Will take thee from me. Everything must pass
Swiftly -- but nought so swift as dawn-delight.
If I could hold thee till the day,
Is broad on sea and hill,
Child of repose,
What god can say,
What god or mortal knows,
What dream thou mightest not in me fulfil?

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My spirit over faint cool water glides,
Child of the day,
To thee;
And thou art drawn
By kindred impulse over silver tides
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Lake Lemnan

It is the sacred hour: above the far
Low emerald hills that northward fold,
Calmly, upon the blue the evening star
Floats, wreathed in dusky gold.
The winds have sung all day; but now they lie
Faint, sleeping; and the evening sounds awake.
The slow bell tolls across the water: I
Am haunted by the spirit of the lake.
It seems as though the sounding of the bell
Intoned the low song of the water-soul,
And at some moments I can hardly tell
The long-resounding echo from the toll.
O thou mysterious lake, thy spell
Holds all who round thy fruitful margin dwell.
Oft have I seen home-going peasants' eyes
Lit with the peace that emanates from thee.
Those who among thy waters plunge, arise
Filled with new wisdom and serenity.
Thy veins are in the mountains. I have heard,
Down-stretched beside thee at the silent noon,
With leaning head attentive to thy word,
A secret and delicious mountain-tune,
Proceeding as from many shadowed hours
In ancient forests carpeted with flowers,
Or far, where hidden waters, wandering
Through banks of snow, trickle, and meet, and sing.
Ah, what repose at noon to go,
Lean on thy bosom, hold thee with wide hands,
And listen for the music of the snow!
But most, as now,
When harvest covers thy surrounding lands,
I love thee, with a coronal of sheaves
Crowned regent of the day;
And on the air thy placid breathing leaves
A scent of corn and hay.
For thou hast gathered (as a mother will
The sayings of her children in her heart)
The harvest-thoughts of reapers on the hill,
When the cool rose and honeysuckle fill
The air, and fruit is laden on the cart.
Thou breathest the delight
Of summer evening at the deep-roofed farm
And meditation of the summer night,
When the enravished earth is lying warm
From the recent kisses of the conquering sun.

Dwell as a spirit in me, O thou one
Sweet natural presence. In the years to be
When all the mortal loves perchance are done,
Them I will bid farewell, but, oh, not thee.
I love thee. When the youthful visions fade,
Fade thou not also in the hopeless past.

Be constant and delightful, as a maid
Sought over all the world, and found at last.

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