Classic Poetry Series

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- poems -

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A Rhyme of Death's Inn

A rhyme of good Death's inn!
My love came to that door;
And she had need of many things,
The way had been so sore.

My love she lifted up her head,
"And is there room?" said she;
"There was no room in Bethlehem's inn
For Christ who died for me."

But said the keeper of the inn,
"His name is on the door."
My love then straightway entered there:
She hath come back no more.

Love came back at Fall o' Dew

Love came back at fall o' dew, Playing his old part; But I had a word or two That would break his heart.

"He who comes at candlelight, That should come before, Must betake him to the night From a barred door."

This the word that made us part In the fall o' dew; This the word that brake his heart -- Yet it brake mine, too.

Oh, Gray And Tender Is The Rain

Oh, gray and tender is the rain, That drips, drips on the pane! A hundred things come in the door, The scent of herbs, the thought of yore.

I see the pool out in the grass, A bit of broken glass; The red flags running wet and straight, Down to the little flapping gate.

Lombardy poplars tall and three, Across the road I see; There is no loveliness so plain As a tall poplar in the rain.

But oh, the hundred things and more, That come in at the door! --The smack of mint, old joy, old pain, Caught in the gray and tender rain.

Spicewood

The spicewood burns along the gray, spent sky, In moist unchimneyed places, in a wind, That whips it all before, and all behind, Into one thick, rude flame, now low, now high, It is the first, the homeliest thing of all--At sight of it, that lad that by it fares, Whistles afresh his foolish, town-caught airs--A thing so honey-colored, and so tall!

It is as though the young Year, ere he pass, To the white riot of the cherry tree, Would fain accustom us, or here, or there, To his new sudden ways with bough and grass, So starts with what is humble, plain to see, And all familiar as a cup, a chair.

Tears

When I consider Life and its few years -A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;
A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street, -I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains, and bards, and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep:
Homer his sight, David his little lad!

That Day you came

Such special sweetness was about That day God sent you here, I knew the lavender was out, And it was mid of year.

Their common way the great winds blew, The ships sailed out to sea; Yet ere that day was spent I knew Mine own had come to me.

As after song some snatch of tune Lurks still in grass or bough, So, somewhat of the end o' June Lurks in each weather now.

The young year sets the buds astir,
The old year strips the trees;
But ever in my lavender
I hear the brawling bees.

For me the jasmine buds unfold
And silver daisies star the lea,
The crocus hoards the sunset gold,
And the wild rose breathes for me.
I feel the sap through the bough returning,
I share the skylark's transport fine,
I know the fountain's wayward yearning,
I love, and the world is mine!

I love, and thoughts that sometime grieved,
Still well remembered, grieve not me;
From all that darkened and deceived
Upsoars my spirit free.
For soft the hours repeat one story,
Sings the sea one strain divine;
My clouds arise all flushed with glory -I love, and the world is mine!