

## Poetry Series

# Sophia White

- poems -

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## **Sophia White ('90)**

When Sophia is not at class, doing homework, trimming hedges, spelunking, sleeping, eating, reading, or spending time with her friends, she writes poetry. 'I first became interested in poetry when I took a class on it in the ninth grade,' says Ms. White. 'I am enthralled by such poets as Shel Silverstein, Alfred Noyes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Don Marquis.' When asked where she finds her inspiration for her poems, Ms White thoughtfully twirls one golden red curl around a finger before replying, 'I think that people I know well and care about a lot can move me to words, as well as particularly emotional experiences. That is when I write my more personal poems, such as 'Darklings' and 'When Words Fail.' However, when I am in a 'green' sort of mood (read 'Color Me! '), I love to write idylls and ballads, like 'A Light and Fair Wind's Blowing', 'My Myles Has Gone Away', and 'Cursed.' Ms. White has been writing poetry for one year - 'And it's been a most lovely year, too, perhaps the best I have yet lived!' At sixteen years old, Ms. White is a young poet, just begun on her literary endeavors. She looks forward to growing in her creativity and command of the poetic devices. 'I think structured, rhymed, and metered poems are the most delightful,' she says, 'and I think free verse is used much too freely and in often bad taste. Much of my own free verse is ill done. It is much harder to write a structured poem, but the results are so much more rewarding.' When asked what her goal as a poet is, she promptly replies, 'I want to write poems that leave the reader with a refreshed, sweet, and pleasant taste on their lips, as though they had just sampled a small droplet of nectar from a honeysuckle.' Ms. White lives in the lush green foothills of the Appalachian mountains, where she and a small group of friends write poems frequently. She enjoys outdoor activities and anything related to literature.

### **Works:**

'A Light and Fair Wind's Blowing' published in 'Immortal Verses' by the International Library of Poetry. Also, two other poems published in some books somewhere, but she isn't sure where. She's rather scatterbrained.

## **A Child's Dream**

I loved to look upon him,  
The Hunter near the Way.  
So strong his arm and long his bow  
And so bashful of the Day.  
His courage never failed him  
For he held his mace so high  
And glared at the Bull in the River  
And ruled the whole breadth of the sky.  
As a girl, young and silly,  
I oft dreamed of being the Maid.  
And meeting, one nighttime afternoon,  
The Hunter, in a starry glade.  
And we would love 'pon sight  
And marry in a cloud of joy.  
What strange and daring dreams  
A little girl may employ.

Sophia White

## **A Day's Work**

What ho! A day's work is done.  
Work indeed! For I've done none.  
No bread is earned, no bacon won,  
Oh, the sand of words is run.  
For me there's no appreciation,  
For you can't sell poems to an American.

Sophia White

## **A Lack of Company**

The pear trees are raising their arms to the sky,  
Adorned with white blossoms that cascade like pearls,  
In a motionless dance that honors the day.  
The mockingbird raises a cadence so spry  
It turns little boys out and lures shy little girls  
From inside the houses and outside to play.  
But there are no boys and no girls to come out.  
They've all gone away, and it's the funniest thing:  
Gone to seek elsewhere, for they're bored of this place!  
Alone, I must marvel at these wonders about.  
All alone. Alone to hear the mockingbird sing,  
Alone to find sunbeams and shadows to chase.

There is dew in the morning and rain in the eve,  
To wet down the world, and wash it all clean,  
To shine up the trees and bejewel the rose.  
But that's not all this new season can weave:  
There's brilliant sunlight to thread in between,  
That sharpens the shadows, in which I may doze.  
But the shade is so lonely, when it is only me,  
Though the birds and the squirrels both abound.  
I find it all lovely, but wish for one thing:  
Someone to share the shade of this tree,  
And to help me chase shadows that run on the ground,  
And sit with me to listen to mockingbirds sing.

Sophia White

## **A Lament for Mr. Alexander**

Oh my master, my master,  
My inspiration, who, when I was afraid  
Urged me gently on to find a dream –  
To weave a world –  
And now it seems  
That you shall never even know my name.

Oh my teacher, my light,  
My wayfinder, who led me into night  
And showed me the sun.  
Oh my master!  
You set me on my way  
The distance I have come - I owe to you.  
My master, who never knew you had an apprentice.

I wrapped your words about me  
I pondered, and I cherished.  
I learned from you and admired  
And wished beyond every hope  
That one day – maybe – you and I  
Could shake hands, say "Hello"  
And sit and talk about our words.

But oh! My beloved master!  
You have gone, and I –  
I remain in misery, comforted only  
By the lights you lit and left  
For me, though you  
Never even knew my name.

Sophia White

## **A Light and Fair Wind's Blowing**

Come, boy, and let us run  
And soak up all this lovely sun.  
Let no one dictate where we're going,  
For soft, a light and fair wind's blowing.

The fields are gold and grand today.  
They call with faerie voice and say,  
"Children come, put down your sewing,  
For soft, a light and fair wind's blowing."

Come, girl, and dance and sing,  
And join our hands in merry ring.  
For the world all her delights are showing,  
And soft, a light and fair wind's blowing.

The trees are tall and great with leaf.  
Let us bind them up in kingly wreath.  
The sky is bright, the flowers glowing  
And soft, a light and fair wind's blowing!

Sophia White

## **A Man, A Cloak, A Gondola**

A Man, A Cloak, a Gondola,  
A Subterranean Sea.  
These Four recurring Elements  
Compose a Mystery.

I draw him many, many times  
Boating on that Sea.  
And beneath his slippr'y boat  
An eel with dagger teeth.

I don't know how this imagery  
Is always in my mind.  
Perhaps it is a forewarning,  
A vision of some kind.

A Man, A Cloak, A Gondola,  
A Subterranean Sea.  
The Four recurring Elements  
Compose a Mystery.

Sophia White

## **A Song**

The sky is bright, the sun's on the sea  
The salt's in the wind and the wind's on me.

The world is good, the weather's fair,  
Here on the shore, I've naught a care.

The sand is white as the clouds above  
The world resounds with heaven's love.

The birds all wheel and cry their song  
And sea and wind all hum along.

No sound could best that lively tune  
That rocks the waves and builds the dunes.

The sky is bright, the sun's on the sea  
The salt's in the wind and the wind's on me.

Sophia White

## **A Song for the Road**

Lay-O! Lay-O!  
A song for the road:  
I'm up with the sun  
Away I shall go!  
My feet hit the road  
And the road rises up  
To bear me away - O!  
Lay-O! Lay-O!  
A song for the road:  
Back I shan't go,  
That I well know.  
'Tis elsewhere I'm headed  
With no map and no guide,  
To find what I'll find  
Whatever that is -O!  
Lay-O! Lay-O!  
A song for the road:  
The stars cannot catch me,  
Not the moon, nor the sun.  
Faster and farther away I run!  
Here I go! Here I go!  
To where - I dunno,  
But I'll bet the road does  
And it takes me away -O!  
Lay-O! Lay-O!  
A song for the road,  
A song for tomorrow,  
Lay-O-lai-lay-O!

Sophia White

## **A String of Simile**

Words bind me, wrapping around me like vines  
And like vines they grow, and constrict, like a boa  
And like a boa they hiss in my ear, the most wonderful things.

Words chain me, tethering my wrists and ankles like iron  
And like iron they do not rot or wither, like Eternity,  
And like Eternity, I do not know when they will end.

Words shackle me, holding me down like paralysis,  
And like paralysis, they have no immediate cure - like Love,  
And like Love, within them I am free and beautiful and alive.

Sophia White

## **A Study in Murder**

Silent and still, the trees are Watching.  
Watching without eyes.  
Silent and still, the trees are Watching.  
Watching as a human dies.

Bright and quick, a blade is Flashing.  
Flashing into its sleeve.  
Bright and quick, a blade is Flashing.  
Flashing without obliquy.

Soft and dark, a cloak is Whipping.  
Whipping past a lifeless brow.  
Soft and dark, a cloak is Whipping.  
Whipping by without a sound.

Sophia White

## **A Teacher, A Pen, and A Handshake**

A teacher, a pen, a handshake.  
Three deaths in one day  
And each a death-toll in my heart.  
I cannot even pray  
My soul is so overwrought.  
How much light can the darkness take?  
Does eternity truly hold us apart?

A teacher, a pen, a handshake.  
Three bodies in one grave.  
Oh, you wretched world, mourn deep!  
For one who freely gave  
Of truth and love and soulful ink.  
I fear my soul and heart shall break!  
For death has taken them into its keep.

A teacher, a pen, a handshake.  
Three stars fallen in space  
Which once burned bright as the tears  
Burning on my face.  
How solemn strike the chords of death  
Such a mournful tune they make –  
And the Weaver of Worlds on a bier!

Sophia White

## **A Thousand Knights!**

A thousand knights raise salute!  
The sun illumines metal suits  
And they outshine the sun.

A thousand knights lift their blades!  
Away in fear run shadows and shades  
Who cannot stand the light.

A thousand knights urge their steeds!  
The ones in front all take the lead  
And charge against the Foe.

A thousand knights clash and roar  
Against the vast and evil horde  
And blade encounters blade.

A thousand knights are lost to sight!  
The dust of battle takes to flight  
And masks the grueome scene.

A thousand knights – can they succeed?  
By Heaven's Blade, they can indeed!  
See – the dust has fallen still –

A thousand knights stand in the sun!  
Raise the banners! They have won!  
A thousand knights and not one fell!  
Now there's a deed of which to tell.

Sophia White

## **A Tirelan Song**

At the foot of the mount where the rock men dwell  
And below the green plain where the goats graze  
Tall reach the trees that Wintonwi hands  
Called from the earth in Queen Ailynwy's days.

They called from the earth the fether tree  
They called to life the fair serenity  
Of the trees as sweet as a melody  
On the winds that blow from the crystal sea.

And the trees grew as tall as the clouds above  
Adorned with leaves like feathers of glass  
That danced and whispered to Saphilora,  
And the Wind played in them as a carefree lass.

They called from the earth the fether tree  
They called to life the fair serenity  
Of the trees as sweet as a melody  
On the winds that blow from the crystal sea.  
The trees as sweet as a melody  
Melodious trees of Ailynwy.

Sophia White

## **A Woven Web of Light**

The clouds have scared the stars away  
And I am left alone.  
So I weave above my head  
A thousand of my own.  
They run and chase one another  
A shining web of light  
And with their valiant brilliance hold  
At bay the jealous night.

Sophia White

## **Abroad Too Long**

Walking down the cobbled street,  
Wondering distantly how old those stone were  
And looking with disinterest at the cathedrals,  
And the columns and arches that rise  
Like a great garden of stone flowers  
That I cannot pick.

Hearing the muted strains of a violin  
From some unseen corner where some unseen  
Frustrated musician is playing for forints,  
And I feel the sorrow in each strike of the bow  
Reverberate against my tired bones  
In a sepulchral strain.

Thoughtlessly tossing pebbles into the river,  
Then realizing I am tossing coins,  
So I pour out my purse with melancholic abandon  
And let the river have its fun,  
Because I have had my fill of it,  
And want only to go home.

Sophia White

## **Adopted Strays**

They fill my every shelf and every basket.  
My sock drawer holds more of them than socks.  
My closet overflows with them – I cannot open the door  
Without getting a toe or two smashed by their fall.  
They stack against the wall and in the corners,  
Spreading like a plague beneath the bed.  
They function as side-tables and doorstops,  
And sometimes stray even into the hall.  
I cannot keep them under control at all,  
And just when it seems they are finally in hand  
A few more wander through the door,  
And beg with silent eyes for a place to say  
What can I say? They are so lovely  
And they smell so very nice – I must concede.  
Though my mind chides me, knowing I shall never read  
All these strays I've adopted – all these books.

Sophia White

## **Ah! But 'Tis a Small World Which I Govern**

Ah! But 'tis a small world which I govern  
A world oft scorned by company  
Though venerated, surely, for it's age,  
It receives little acclamation, if any.  
Who, upon my approach, would ask  
"What goes on in your world today? "  
Nay, for 'tis a lonely institution  
A quiet and secluded sort of play.  
Ah! But 'tis a small world which I govern.  
When the sky is full of so many spheres,  
Here am I, on my one and only horizon,  
Detained by time, resources, and fears.  
Durst I tarry here for centuries to come  
My satisfaction feigned with wan smile?  
What choice have I? I suppose 'tis well,  
For I've loved this world for so long a while.

Sophia White

## **Ah, the Soft Guitars that Play**

Ah, the soft guitars that play  
and lull the twilight.  
I, unseen and all alone

Listen from a willow tree  
feeling the warm notes  
Like a breath wash over me.

I envision someone there  
in the willow tree  
Listening softly with me.

Sophia White

## **Alas**

I want to help you.  
I want to free you.  
I want give you rest.  
Alas, but I cannot.

I want to hold you.  
I want to soothe you.  
I want to dry your tears.  
Alas, but I cannot.

I want to calm you.  
I want to give you  
Whatever you may need.  
Alas! For I cannot.

Sophia White

## **All Children Must Grow Up**

All children must grow up. Even me.  
What point there is in this I cannot see.  
I was happier then, and so very free.

Days suddenly turn into years.  
Smiles cruelly disappear in tears.  
Derring do crumbles before new fears.

The past is soon forgotten in light  
Of sudden bills and the lonely fight  
To live and not be eaten by the night.

Kind and wild forests sadly turn  
Into wasted deserts that burn  
With too much sun. I yearn.

All children must grow up. Even me.  
What point there is in this I cannot see.  
This cannot be what life was meant to be.

Sophia White

## **All Praise Saphilora**

The trees and grass all sway in time  
And chant in throbbing, runic rhyme  
To match the bells with iron chime  
And praise Saphilora.

All the stars in myraid sing  
The cocktirel upon the wing  
The stones with grinding voices ring  
And praise Saphilora.

The rain and snow and ice and hail  
Raise up a wet and chilling wail  
In the roar of the juggernaut gale  
And praise Saphilora.

In all Tirel, from sea to sea,  
From Eagles' Ayries to Crystalline,  
Myana, Tira, Metglochan trees,  
All praise Saphilora!

Sophia White

## **An Angel and a Violet - in the Garden**

A small garden, lush with flowers  
Pinks and whites and lavenders  
Specked with candles in colored glass  
Strolled two young and handsome lovers.

The moon was half a glass of wine,  
The stars were shards of shattered glass.  
The water tumbled through its bed  
Where the gentleman walked beside his lass.

The grass wrapped around their ankles  
As the candlelight dappled the stream  
And the stones shone white in the moon  
But none outshone the young girl's beam.

And I sat on my windowsill,  
Watching with a smile for the two,  
As I picked up my rough wooden flute  
And began to play a romantic tune.

Sophia White

## **And Here I Sit and Wonder What to Write**

And here I sit and wonder how to write  
Wonder what I have to you impart  
If indeed I have within my heart  
The knowledge of a way out of this night.  
If, within my soul, I have a flame  
To which you lightless ones may move;  
If I have see through eyes of love  
That see the times and thus the times may tame.

I wonder if I know what you do not  
And if I have the means to tell you aught.  
I wonder if I ponder hidden thought  
That, if left untold, is all for naught.

And here am I in stupefaction stood,  
Inquiring what I have that may be good;  
And how to tell you of it if I could,  
For if I had it, assuredly I would.

And now I know the word to which I'm bound,  
The word which, to me, is plainly writ  
And yet I balk at simply scribbling it,  
Is truly all I have worth writing down.  
The only flame I hold within my soul  
Is indeed the flame I'd rather hide.  
I ought to, with abandon, open wide  
And let the words of life within me roll.

I know that I know things which you do not,  
That I hold great and everlasting thought.  
That my eyes see with love by which I'm bought  
And how I'd err to have that love forgot!

I must settle war within my heart  
So that peace to you I might impart  
And on the road to Life you may soon start.  
I'll hasten that you may at dawn depart.

Sophia White

### **And The Best Part Is...**

And the best part is –  
Now that the mixing is over,  
Now that the mixture is poured,  
The mold is set in place, and filled,  
With hearts fixed on lovers...

The plaster (of Poetry) takes shape  
Hardens until it is Done  
Becoming like stone, unbreakable.  
The style, the form, the theme,  
With thoughts fixed on someone...

Again and again, as history repeats,  
Hearts pour out hopes become hard,  
And love binds the plaster,  
Making it forever,  
And great grows the legions of bards.

Sophia White

## **Anthropophobia**

I walk into the teeming room  
Brimming with people  
It seems to me  
That it must be  
They all turn to stare at me.

I walk down sidewalks cleanly swept  
Walk through grass so finely clipped  
It seems to me  
That it must be  
Other walkers turn to stare at me.

I drive through crowds of thronging faces  
Filling the street with furtive cliques  
It seems to me  
That it must be  
They all turn to stare at me.

I walk into the lonely wood  
Where trees like towers gently rise  
It seems to me  
That it must be  
Here there are none to stare at me.

Sophia White

## **Art**

There's a fellow on my desk  
His name is Art Bigotti.  
He is a mannikin, and yet  
So human in his mood.  
Sometimes he is dancing,  
At others, he leaps.  
Now a prima donna  
Now a soaring Icarus.  
I sketch him, and well,  
Yet never can I capture  
That mood he holds  
His poise, that is very well,  
But he is an elusive  
Personality.

Sophia White

## **As an Eagle**

I was down  
I was weary  
I was running  
About to faint  
But You  
You were there  
You heard my prayer  
And raised me up!

On wings  
As an Eagle  
Flying for You  
You alone!

I was failing  
I was worn  
I was falling  
About to drop  
But you  
You were there  
You heard my prayer  
And raised me up!

On wings  
As an Eagle  
Flying for You  
You alone.

Sophia White

## **Baby**

She tottles about  
A funny toy  
I love her so.  
Such a joy  
But then she climbs  
Atop the table  
I try to scold  
But I am unable.  
Who could say "No! "  
To a Madelaine so  
Adorable?

Her eyes are blue  
So bonny and bright  
I cannot stay angry  
Try as I might.  
She giggles and winks  
I wave the Spoon  
"I'll spank'ee"  
She sees right through!

Sophia White

## Beast

(my attempt at modernism in the eliotine manner)

It lurks.  
It drools on the threshold of my mind –  
Nameless, heartless beast,  
Waiting, ever waiting, for me to take one – step – out.  
Then, oh then it shall leap  
High into the air and land, claws first, on my head.

I watch a cat wait by a hole in the ground.  
It does not move save for the flick of its long, thin tail.  
The foolish mole emerges  
Pounce!  
Its silly spine snapped between fangs!  
I shiver and wrap a fringed afghan tighter around my back.

I hear it, the quiet drops of spittle on the threshold of my mind.  
Each dropp hisses, "Come out, come out, I know you're in there."  
I close my eyes tighter – little good.  
It is, after all, my mind, which lies just behind and a bit above  
The eyes.

Oh, the chilling trap I have laid for myself!  
The rawest and everlasting freedom is here, inside,  
But something hovering around the core of my mind – or my soul? –  
Wants so desperately to be devoured,  
And I fear  
I may not control that urge for long.

The beast does offer a tempting alternative  
To freedom, life, love, and hope:  
"Exchange it, " it bids me, "for a brilliant light  
For a treasure chest  
For a name on one of those columns you yourself have written of."  
Oh! The bitter gray areas!

In the day, I am in a great crowd, and with so many witnesses surrounding me,  
I dare not let my mind wander.  
I must focus, on warmth and love and servitude,  
(But at night!) No one is there, and my mind, a rebellious rover,  
Dreams of the beast and his offer.

No! I must not let myself wander.  
(How cruel I must appear, to jerk my own consciousness about on this leash.)  
Animalistic, I tell myself with disgust.  
Craving worldliness... fame and fortune... a name on a column wrapped in vines...  
Again I wander. Hopeless, hopeless.... hopeless....

Sophia White

## Beautiful Flight

(Sophia's first poem,2002)

I sat and gazed at the ever blue sky  
At the sparrows and robins wheeling around  
At the lazy clouds drifting in silence  
Wishing I was not stuck on the ground.

A lion prowled over the clear blue sky  
Stalking the stag that pranced nearby.  
And a fish swam as in watery depths  
And my heart sang, If only I could fly!

To fly like an eagle, golden and strong  
To fly like a butterfly, beautiful and bright.  
To fly like a cloud, with nary a care.  
Oh, wouldn't it be such a glorious flight!

The surf of the seashore rose and fell  
The wind whistled past brushing away fears  
When a faint purr like that of a kitten  
Came drifting gently to my listening ears.

Up I did leap and away I did go  
To find what did make such an odd sound.  
And I mounted a dune and blinked once or twice  
For what I saw made my head spin 'round!

A monstrous contraption of cloth and of wood  
Sailed o'er the sand like a ship of old.  
Faster and faster upon a small rail  
And went up! Wondrous sight to behold!

It flew like an eagle, golden and strong,  
It flew like a butterfly, beautiful and bright.  
It flew like a cloud, with nary a care,  
Oh! Wasn't it such a beautiful flight!

The men on the ground cheered and clapped.  
They had succeeded where all others had failed.  
And the ship of the air with grace unsurpassed  
Just flew! Yes, I tell you – it sailed!

I never forgot the ship that I saw  
As I stood on those windy sands.  
Finally Man had broken his bounds  
And left behind the trappings of land.

There on that island, small Kitty Hawk,  
The triumph of triumphs took flight,  
And though I watched from the ground  
My heart sailed with that sky ship of white!

Sophia White

## Beautiful Intent

I hear soft footsteps come down the hall and stop at my door.  
She's here once more.  
I lean down lower over my studies, eyes riveted to a figure-riddled page.  
I hear her breath in the crystal silence, a breath that grips my core  
And brings me to my feet. I turn.  
When shall I ever learn? she asks. You fool!  
Are you just stopping by? I ask with ice on my tongue.  
She smiles just as coldly. At least she might've rung  
The doorbell, but she just walked in. She always does.

Silence. Silence. Silence.  
A thickening, a darkening of ambience.  
Her eyes and mine, locked in a duel of wills.  
My soul throbs with rapture at the sight of her, but still  
My mind rebels and tries to pull my gaze around to my desk.  
I'll just ask.  
Are you here, I whisper soft, to drop a passing verse?  
(Oh, whatever happened to the lecture I'd rehearsed?)  
Her smile wanes; she will soon cut to the chase.  
The answer is scrawled across her face.  
I drop my mechanical pencil, but I do not hear it hit the floor  
Because she has entered the door.  
And crossed the room. And held out her hand.

My mind relents and is soon lost in wild schemes  
(Why not, it hisses, why not let yourself go to your most sacred dreams?)  
My soul is ready. I take her hand – and then –  
A whirl, a giddy rush of blood fills my head, spots in my eyes,  
And then I am not me anymore. Where I am, I cannot tell.  
I've no desire to return to that pragmatic hell.  
Instead, Sophia snips my wretched tether of duty, which tied me to propriety,  
To society.  
She smiles again – when did her smile seem cold?  
I feel so wise, and alive, and extraordinarily identified, and terribly old.

I wonder at my past hesitation.  
My fears, bound to me by the tether, evaporate into elation.  
Here I am, truly and wildly unique with a mind that aches to create.  
There are worlds out there, I am sure of it, and I'm late  
To discover them. I was tethered, you see.  
But she –  
She cut my leash. And now, that tiny, exiled pragmatic and dutiful corner of me  
Timidly sends a question that is obliterated by the exploding creativity  
Of these two paths – Sophia and me - is this the path I ought to walk  
Or am I all talk?  
Puffing myself up with grandiose vision and beautiful intent,  
When, at long last, this is not at all the world to which I have been sent?

I want it to be my reality.  
I want to leave the pragmatic hell, the dutiful halls of nominal charity.  
I want to stop filling my head and instead, empty it.  
To pour out everything within me, to let it soak into the earth,

Where maybe it will give rise to a harvest far greater...

Sophia White

## Being the First Installment of 'Gedion'

I  
A land so vast it might have been a world  
A land enreathed in magic, ancient charm  
The soil steeped with enchantments long cast  
The wind carrying spells and fairy dust  
The forests groves of antique charms  
Laid by long forgotten wielders of the Flame  
The people all with magic in their veins  
Not unused to seeing the supernatural  
A self-scrubbing pot, a shifting hat,  
A disappearing cloak or a charmed brush –  
All ordinary sights in old, old Avendon.

II  
Over Avendon a shadow lay  
Lay as deeply as the night's own cloak  
Shadow of Death, Decay, and Doom,  
Cast by one absolute monarch  
The Dai'maryen of old Avendon.  
The Dai'maryen of the ages past  
All had been wise and just and fair  
Strong in Magic, Charms, and Enchants,  
All good men, rulers deserving their throne.  
But Ashreal the Dark was darker than night  
His workings all for evil and the dread  
Ashreal the Dark, the Lord of Avendon,  
Put shame to the sacred name Dai'maryen.  
And all Avendon lay helpless in his grip  
For thirty years, Avendon lay captive.

III  
The Wonder Workers were the men and women  
Who pledged themselves to Good and the Light  
They met in secret, forced so by Ashreal  
Death awaited Workers who were revealed.  
Death at the hands of Vadi, Ashreal's men  
The Workers, small in number, lived their lives  
As citizens of no importance, seeming,  
Blending with the people of Avendon  
Who used Magic, but in the smallest ways,  
Unskilled, base, and weak in the Charms.  
The Workers hid, and waited, biding time...

IV  
One night, as the wind howled angrily  
Through hamlet Sadlehem in Avendon,  
An inn so small it might have been a house,  
Eight Workers met to finally lay their plot.  
One, a Vietlander, strong and broad,  
Second, from Khalata, dark and slim,  
Third, a fair-haired lass from Tel,

Fourth, an elder of the Ring in Chael,  
Fifth, the Lord of the House Damroni,  
Sixth, a poor tailor from Yegrie,  
Seventh, a woman great with child,  
Eighth, a redhead sailor of Maresh Sea.  
While the tailor watched the night for feared Vadi,  
The seven left brought forth their Fragments.  
The Fragments were ancient words first laid  
By Baribar, the Dai'maryen greatest of all,  
The most skilled and powerful Wielder of Charm  
In all the long history of Avendon.  
The Fragments, handed down from father to son,  
By Workers, through the generations run  
At last came together through long toil  
To meet and piece together the puzzle.  
Eight pieces laid on the table – cloth  
Remnants of Baribar's finest robe  
On which, in the tongue Vreddaire,  
The Pieces of the legend Puzzle lay.

V

"A time will come three thousand years hence  
When men will all bow to one, the Dark.  
All will seem dead and lost in that day.  
But forth will come one greater than even I!  
Gedion he shall be called by the True.  
The Light embodied, Good taken flesh,  
Though a mere man he may first be.  
Seek him in the Willows, faithful eight."  
Each sentence one of the pieces eight  
Together placed by the Workers brave  
And when at last the puzzle had been solved,  
Only one last thing to them remained:  
To seek him in the Willows.  
To find the legendary saviour, Gedion.

.....to be continued.....

Sophia White

## **Benediction**

May the winds of fortune blow  
Softly 'cross your brow.  
May the darkness flee from you  
And light lance all around.  
May the swords of all your foes  
Break beneath your feet.  
May you make a lasting friend  
Of everyone you meet.  
May the sun ne'er burn too bright  
Nor the moon too cold.  
May you in strength be always young  
And yet in wisdom, old.  
May your words be evermore  
Your path be straight and true  
May your footsteps leave a trail  
For all to follow you.

Sophia White

## **Blue Eyes**

Blue eyes caught me  
For a moment.

Blue eyes smiled  
For a moment.

Blue eyes winked at me  
For a moment.

But I shut the blue eyes  
In a closet.

I tossed the key  
Into the sea.

Sophia White

## **Book and Me**

Me and my book are curled up here  
My great fat book and me;  
We are a pair, are we,  
He talks and I lend him my ear.  
We are great friends  
And when he ends  
I put him back up on the shelf  
He's a little put out  
But he never pouts  
For he doesn't mind being by himself.  
He told me once  
"Only a dunce  
Would leave me there all alone  
And never read me  
Never heed me  
And forget what a friend he owns.  
But I never do  
As friends, we are true,  
And I'd never leave him too long.  
My great fat book and me  
We are a pair, are we,  
And how easily we do get along!

Sophia White

## Butterfly

A butterfly, sweet and innocent,  
Floating on a breeze,  
Floating in insignificance,  
Flaps its tiny wings:

Across the shuddering, groaning earth,  
Goes the infinitesimal force.  
A ripple from a butterfly's wing –  
Happily on its course.

It gently taps (oh, misery!)  
Against a larger air,  
Ignorant of the energies  
Just hanging – potentially – there.

Oh! Poor little butterfly-force!  
So innocent, care-free!  
See the storm thou hast unleashed,  
That covers land and sea!

It lays to waste the little church,  
The school, the house, the trees.  
And all is barren, ravished, dead,  
The earth is on its knees!

Oh, little, unsullied butterfly,  
Oh, sweetest rose on wings,  
How is it you are responsible  
For such devastating things?

(Here, alone, I weep, I weep,  
Only God can hear me cry.  
For I know, within my soul,  
I am a butterfly.)

Sophia White

## Byrn

Fierce impassioned flame  
Set to byrning  
Heart blazing wild  
Spirit chyrning  
Fledgling me for flight  
Sorely yyrning  
Still just a child  
Lost in lyrning

Wyrds can't be preached  
'Till they're lyrned  
Wyrds can't be lyrned  
'Till their hyrd  
Still I am fettered  
Lyrning wyrds  
Wanting fierce to fly  
With the byrds.

Dampened time I fear  
Will soon spyrn  
The brilliant vibrant flames  
Set to byrn  
And to lesser byways  
I will tyrn  
Long before I have time  
To lyrn!

Sophia White

## **Campfire**

campfire: burning  
thoughts: forming  
visions: clearing

every eye is focusing  
on the swaying rhythms  
the wild situations  
of the angry flames

hopes: lifting  
eyes: drifting  
worlds: shifting

every mind is wand'ring  
to cloudy dreams unveiling  
daringly they wonder  
at the not-too-distant future

Sophia White

## **Candle-Lighting**

Dear girl,

Words are words, faulty things  
One word can mean, well, anything.  
You may say it in one sense  
But other minds may bear it hence  
And destroy your pretty phrase  
With hoping, wishful, evil ways.

Dear girl,

As one who cares, let me be frank.  
My face, in this, is often blank  
But you do light little flames  
And none but yourself is to blame.  
Beware your candles, little girl.  
Beware the twistings of the world.

Sophia White

## **Cannonball!**

Pitter patter pitter patter  
Sounding down the hall  
Tipping feet tapping feet  
Padding-soft-as-cat feet  
Puttering, pittering, down the hall  
Pitter patter pitter patter  
Wild undulating scream!  
Cannonball!  
Hair and lace and small bare feet  
In a wild tangle flies  
Behind a pair of great blue eyes!  
Giggle and another shriek  
Too slippery to catch!  
Twirl away and launch again  
Flutter thick eyelash and then  
Cannonball!  
Knot of curls and feet and ribbon  
Twirling, falling, leaping, shrieking  
Pitter patter pitter patter  
Sneak away! Shhh! Sneak away!  
Pitter patter... pitter... patter...  
Cannonball!

Sophia White

## **Carousel**

Gentle lights whirr  
To the tune of pipes  
And soundless hooves.  
The blue-suited man waves  
First time around – tenth.  
I cannot grow dizzy and fall  
Not with my hand held tight  
Like it is.

The Tiger chases Horse  
And the Elephant marches.  
Behind me, Giraffe rears  
And Zebra brays.  
I ride the gracious Swan  
And you the Lion,  
On our Carousel.

Sophia White

## **Cease Thy Plodding!**

Time... drags... by...  
With achingly... slow... steps.  
His head... is bent... with fatigue  
And his energy... is spent...  
So... deliberate his... pace  
And his eyes... lidded.  
If only... I were not... bogged down  
By Time's... tedious crawl...  
I would take a whip  
And teach Time to gallop!

Sophia White

## Charcoal

I remember when –  
I was a fine and proud maple,  
Or was I an oak?  
Ah, you see, I remember not so well –

But then, I fell –  
Toppling in a great and mighty storm,  
Or was it an axe?  
So long, so long ago it was I fell –

And then, somehow –  
Years and years later, I came to be  
Burned by an orange fire.  
And I burned and burned and –

Now, here I lay –  
Amid stones and blackened earth,  
For many more years to come.  
Lying here, with no life left in me –

But, ah, I wonder –  
Shall someone happen upon me lying here,  
And pick me up and then  
With me, scribble something on a wall?

Sophia White

## **Cheese**

My words are cheese.  
So meaningless.  
God!  
Take them from me please!  
Make them bigger, better.  
Make them roadsigns, Father.  
Make them lampposts in snowy woods.

My words are cheese.  
Full of holes.  
Sour.  
Take them from me please!  
Make them wiser, purer.  
Make them holy, Father.  
Make them candles in darkling nests.

Sophia White

## Child Sense

When children, we wish to stay young.  
To run and forever play.  
A million little Peter Pans  
Forever young to stay.

When we hit thirteen, we want to go.  
To be as old as we can look.  
We dropp our toys for keys  
Electronics in place of picture book.

We run as fast as our legs can go.  
To be eighteen! To be cool!  
We want to be away from Mom,  
We want be free of school.

And then, when we get to the "perfect age"  
We stay a little while in bliss.  
But soon as we see that age go slipping by  
We cry and scream and hiss.

And then we spend the rest of life  
On food and makeup and toys  
That make us feel as though we were  
Still little girls and boys.

Why is it that when we seem to mature  
Our common sense washes away  
Why do we all strive to be one age  
When we know we won't be it, one day?

We run ahead to be twenty and waste  
The years we spend only running.  
Then spend the rest of our live  
Wishing we had stayed where we were.

Are the children the only ones with sense?  
Let us be as they are.  
Let us live who we are.  
Not what we wish that we were.

Sophia White

## **Child, Child**

(Sung to the child(ren) I'm going to adopt one day.)

Child, child, lai la lay,  
I'll hold you tightly one of these days.  
Child, child, lorra lai,  
It will be a while, but you'll be mine.

Child, child, lai la lay,  
I'll stroke your hair and softly say:  
Child, child, lorra lai,  
I'm here to love you and all is right.

Child, child, lai la lay,  
You may not even be alive today.  
Child, child, lorra lai,  
But I'll be waiting for you, child mine.

Sophia White

## Color Me!

Sometimes I can be zany-zony orange  
Crazy as a loon, Light as Splenda  
Popping here and there,  
Floating in the air  
Oh, so debonair  
Bright orange hair.  
I leap off the ceiling  
Tell stupid jokes.  
Slide up the walls,  
Jabber nonsense.  
Turn inside-outside somersaults,  
Twist rightside-leftside-upside-downside  
Inside-outside-frontside-backside  
You never know what I'll say,  
Where I'll go, What I'll do  
When I am feeling orange.

BUT -

Most of the time I am green.  
The deep, rich foresty green  
Of elves and oaks and moss-beds,  
The solemn, sapient, throbbing green  
Of fairy-kissed fiddleheads.  
I withdraw like a dryad into his trunk,  
Reclusive writer I become,  
Creating, thinking, lost in my soliloquy,  
The lamplight shining on my Muse and me  
In our clandestine fernery,  
As we discuss the finer points  
of phantasmagoric reverie.  
We jot down thought and wonder both,  
And tap down fantasy all our own,  
With the living green flowing free  
From Mind to Hands to Paper.  
I think of Hyperbole  
And Synecdoche  
And maybe even Haiku.  
And when my Muse retires,  
I curl up in midst my down,  
and watch the peril, danger, strife,  
victory, sorrow, joy, and life  
Of others when I'm green.

Sophia White

## **Communion**

The world, it's gold and fortune,  
The hopes and dreams and years,  
All the castles and fairy tales,  
The stories and adventures and cheers,  
The hands to hold in adversity,  
The security to rest my head,  
The promises and the ambitions,  
For a little piece of bread.

My life, it's comfort and wishes,  
The smiles and warmth sublime,  
All the pleasures and 'ever afters',  
The summers and winters and time,  
The people to cherish in memory,  
The delectable cuisine to dine,  
The security and the solidity,  
For a little cup of wine.

Sophia White

### **Composed At 10: 15 Friday Night**

Like a song in the night  
A breath of music in the dark  
I hear a voice that seeps through  
The walls, a divine voice.

Like a light in the abyss,  
A pinprick of light in the deeps,  
I hear a voice that wafts through  
The air, a gradiose voice.

Like a rose in a desert,  
Like a lily on a brick walk,  
I hear a voice that floats across  
The ground, a celestial voice.

Whose is it? This voice so strange?  
So clear, a bell, or a hawk.  
Whose voice? I cannot say,  
Yet I would follow it - unto the end.

Sophia White

## Connotations

So small a sound – water rippling.  
So many sights that spring to mind:  
A maid in a white gown, gathering waterlilies.  
A unicorn dipping his head for a sip.  
A fountain burbling with everlasting life.  
A small hand touching a pretty stone.  
A paddle passing through the lake.  
A wave breaking on a moss-covered rock.  
So small a sound – water rippling.

Sophia White

## **Consider the Tree**

I stand, in the low grass so finely clipped,  
And the sun fills the world around me.  
But I stand alone, and the sun cannot find me  
I am hid in the great overpowering shade.

I stand, and the world outside the shade is gone  
There is only me and the shade and the tree.  
A bird sings and a squirrel chirrups, and I –  
I stand and marvel, in the deep blue shade.

I stand, and consider with all my thoughts the tree.  
What it is and how it is and every essence within.  
I consider it in its existence, and what it means.  
And while the world goes on and on and on  
I stand and dream, and consider the tree.

Sophia White

## **Crimson**

I keep tripping  
Falling off my feet  
My eyes are slipping  
Off everyone I meet.

Please stop staring!  
I just want to go alone.  
My stumbles all blaring  
Through a laughing megaphone.

I've no secrets  
That the world will let me keep.  
Just go away –  
Leave me here to weep.

Sophia White

## Critics, Me, and a Poem

"Let us desecrate this poem,  
And bring it down to facts.  
Let's twist these lovely, weaving words  
Into mathematical terms.  
Let us desert the thoughts of the poet  
And look instead to their devices.  
After all, a poem is only what it's made of."

Oh, the rotten, rotten fools.  
I say, "Let's leave it as it is,  
And set our scalpels aside.  
Let us read it to learn, to think,  
And not to disembody it.  
Let us think like the poet thinks,  
And wonder why it was they wrote it.  
After all, a poem is all it is written to be."

They argue, "Let us vivisect it! "  
"No, you'll only violate it! "  
"We shall strip it down and find  
Just what makes the dull thing tick."  
"Keep your hands off, it is sacred,  
Far above your science rules.  
You only want to control it, anyway,  
Because you're afraid of it, fools! "

And whilst we argue, whilst we glare,  
The little poem lying there,  
Has ideas au contraire.  
It gathers up its privacy  
And lightly runs across the table  
Lands on the floor, and skitters out.

Sophia White

## Cursed

Mys, as fair as moonlight, walked among the trees,  
And beneath the wilding sky, by the restless seas.  
Her feet in lily slippers roved the rolling earth  
Nowhere to stay  
Or see the day  
Mys, as sad as rainstorms, cursed since her birth.

Mys, the child of darkness, wished to see the sun,  
See the world in Sol's light, beneath the sky's eye run.  
But lo! the curse upon her forbid her such a sight  
She wept with pain  
But wept in vain,  
Mys could weep herself no aid and so she lived in night.

Mys would linger hopefully, the moon low in the sky  
Her mind would reel and tumble, but on and on she'd try.  
Her eyes would search the east, long only once be blessed,  
But at first ray  
To signal Day  
Mys could not stay her feet which bore her quickly west.

Mys, her hands a-wringing, circled all the world.  
Always running from the sun in a hellish whirl.  
As the earth spun around, Mys had to run ahead  
Hating to run  
From the golden sun  
Hating all the darkness, yet still by darkness led.

Then Mys, her heart resolving, stilled her feet one night,  
Willing all within her, striving with all might:  
Stay! And see the sun! She clung to a pale white tree,  
And when her feet  
Began to flee  
Tight she gripped the tree, teeth bared determinedly!

The moon rolled lower still! Was gone with warning sigh!  
And the sun came shooting! It filled the azure sky!  
It filled her with its brilliance! Her eyes were opened wide!  
She filled with light!  
Laughed at the night!  
Mys saw the radiant sun! She smile once – and died.

Earth shuddered at her passing as though it'd split in half.  
Moon stumbled in its dancing at her first and final laugh.  
The sun looked down in wonder at the girl it'd never seen,  
The curse – it roared!  
As her spirit soared  
Into the sunbright sky, in the light at long last free!

Sophia White

## **Daisy Chain Days**

Two little girls in the meadow  
Amid the dandelions  
Amid the daffodils and daisies  
The clouds are puffs of cotton  
And girls wear slips of white  
Two little girls are spinning  
Young, small, free  
Little feet bare in the flowers  
For bunnies to nibble their toes  
And butterflies alight on their noses  
Giggles bloom like the blossoms  
Of yellow and blue and pink  
Two little girls in the meadow  
Weaving daisies into chains.

Sophia White

## **Dance With Me**

So you wish to dance with me? Come then.  
I'll lead you on a dance as was never danced by men.  
Follow me through shaded brake and glen  
Through dappled wood our winding path shall wend.  
Oh, can you keep time with me, young man?  
Can you get near enough to catch to my twirling hand?  
Come and try to catch it, if you can.  
If you fail at first, do try again! Again! Again!  
Through meadows ripe with sun we shall go.  
Through frosty meadows suffocated in the snow.  
Over mountains where the harsh winds blow  
And hills of the hidden gold where bends the rainbow.  
Come! Come! Swifter now I run!  
Oh, but our dance is still so far from being done!  
And the prize you seek has not been won.  
Do not lag behind – oh dear boy, we've but begun.  
From deserts sands to misty, gnarled moor,  
Flee we now beyond the reach of time and back once more,  
Running through the ocean's ceaseless roar.  
Almost we forget what we started dancing for!  
Are you still behind me? Lose me not!  
I shall dance eternally within your aching thought.  
Try to keep pace! Alas, you cannot!  
Now see what bitter heartbreak your wishing has wrought?

Sophia White

## **Dare I Hope?**

Dare I hope to hope?  
Is it safe? Is it right?  
Am I hoping for nothing  
But a black and empty night?

Hope should make me happy.  
I should laugh, sing, and dance  
Because I am hoping. Right?  
Ha! Not a chance.

How is it that hope can leave me  
Trembling in the darkness?  
How is it that something so "good"  
Should leave me feeling helpless?

Dare I hope to hope?  
What difference does it make?  
Fate will be fate in the end,  
It will either "make or break."

Does Fate regard my hope?  
Does She listen? Or care?  
Am I shooting for a star that  
Simply isn't there?

I cannot know! Oh, God  
Why must I struggle with  
This doubt that pulls at me  
Rends me, limb from limb?

What sort of hope leaves pain  
Where it should instead leave joy?  
Is this hope at all? Or perhaps  
Some wicked demon's ploy?

I cannot know! Dear heaven!  
How can I even begin to dare  
To hope for something – anything?  
Is no assurance there?

No promise? No guarantee?  
I cannot stand it! I cannot!  
The doubt is a plague  
In my every thought.

Dare I hope to hope  
In a hope that leaves me dry  
And lost? How can I dare  
To hope in hope? How can I?

Sophia White

## Darklings

This place is now a nest of darklings.  
The air is rank with all their lies.  
Once it rang with truth so sparkling;  
But now, in the storm, truth dies.  
The hall is dark, and much too fright'ning.  
I'd rather stay beneath the bed.  
The thunder screams behind the lightning.  
Ill sirens scream inside my head.  
I wonder if the Light is coming.  
How I yearn to go Home.  
I want no more of Hate's smug humming.  
No more this earth I wish to roam.  
Oh, Jesus...  
Take me home.

Sophia White

## **Dilemma**

Here, in my little box,  
I feel I am too big.

But, if I were to see the world,  
I fear I'd be too small.

Where then can I go,  
I who belong Nowhere?

How can I, who have outgrown my Puddle,  
Move out and not get lost in the Sea?

Sophia White

## **Do You Hear It?**

Do you hear it?  
There is a soul in there.  
It is playing the piano  
And sighing and weeping.  
Do you feel it?  
There is a soul in there.  
It is remembering.  
Let us leave it alone.

Sophia White

## **Don't Quote Me**

I spit a line, a clever word,  
You wonder at what you just heard.  
I see my trip, ignore my fall.  
Just don't quote me – ever – at all.

I say one thing. I am another.  
No one knows if I'm one or the other.  
What's bluntly said is often wrong.  
Don't quote my word, my rhyme, my song.

On the sidewalk, I scrawl my thoughts  
The lies shine out like bloody spots.  
The truths were small, rain washed them out.  
My whispers are truth, don't quote my shouts.

Sophia White

## **Dread**

What I dread is the knife behind my back  
And the way I grip it, with knuckles pale,  
Waiting for the perfect time to attack  
Considering no other tide or tack,  
And cringing through a gossamer veil.

Half reveling in the anticipation,  
Half dreading the time so doomed to fall.  
What a dark and strange sensation  
This blend of horror and elation,  
This puzzle of love and murderous gall.

How I dread the knife, the hand,  
The inevitability of falling tears.  
Fate lays claim with a fiery brand  
And destines all to fall or stand,  
To live a moment, die for years.

And I wonder, was it I?  
Who chose the fate, or fate chose me.  
Is freedom even worth the try?  
After all, at last I'll die  
And naught shall mean my destiny.

There's little use in thinking deep.  
I know not the paths of time,  
Nor what secrets Fate may keep.  
What is life but one blind leap  
We poets brave through tear-stained rhyme?

Sophia White

## Dream-Trip to Mars

Mars.

Strange red rust world  
Permeated with a scarlet haze  
Red dust settled on the rooftops of shabby houses  
Of trailers and outdated campers  
Red dust filming the treeless, empty street  
Oh, oh, moans the wind as it blows down the road.  
Hot. It is stiflingly hot here. Hot air pressing against me.  
I leave my little ship, its silver body bathed red in the sun  
Its three fragile legs bent outward beneath the pressure.  
Down the street, in the moaning wind, I go,  
Passing rusted trailers, outdated campers,  
All still – the wind does not leave the road.  
No windchimes tinkling – no mowers purring –  
No sound at all, except for the dogs barking.  
Where are they? Where are the dogs?  
No trees to hide behind. No bush or grass.  
Only red, red dirt, hard-packed and dusty.  
Only rusted houses straining against the heavy heat.  
At last, a double-wide with its door open.  
The door does not move, but sits, filmed over with red dust.  
Up two cement blocks and I am inside.

Life.

Three dogs, a shepherd, a beagle, a bulldog.  
They leap out from behind the door, growling, menacing.  
No collars on these dogs. Only tangled, matted fur,  
Fur like Grendel. They are all teeth and nails, and hot red eyes.  
Their eyes. Not rabid – worse. Hard, shiny scarlet eyes  
Full of hot anger, shining with malice.  
Growls and snarls rolling through the hot air at me.  
Away, dogs, away. The sweeping hand, and they bark wildly.  
Stillness, and they growl again. Step forward, and they attack.  
Run, run past the dogs, through a kitchen layered in red dust,  
And rust on the pots in the sink. Rust on the walls, the table.  
Strange red rust world.

Humans.

Three: a man, a woman, a teenage girl. Frozen on the couch,  
Frozen in the oppressive, crushing heat.  
Frozen, and filmed over with red dust.  
Red dust lacing their eyelashes, their lips.  
Scarlet dust matting their hair, clothes,  
And crimson dust caked under their nails.  
Dead? No. Their eyes move.  
Their blue eyes, so chill in the red heat.  
Pupils roll towards me, shock vibrates the lines,  
The delicate lines in their ice-blue irises.  
These people don't move. They are huddled together  
In a little triangle of ice-blue fear they cling.  
Arms crossed on their chests, legs drawn beneath them.  
Head to shoulder they cower on the couch,

Beneath the fine red dust, beneath the heavy red heat.  
On the floor lie more dogs. Mastiff, dachshund, poodle,  
Another bulldog. Coats matted with red dust,  
Eyes slitted, and red fire in the slits.  
The dogs lie in a semicircle, watching the people,  
The blue-eyed people.  
Watching – guarding – holding captive.  
Here are dogs for men, and men for dogs.

Help.  
The people do not speak, do not move.  
They watch me with those eyes blue.  
They speak with their tiny pupils,  
Their wide irises tinged with ice and fear.  
Help, but no hope. Help without belief.  
I want to help these people,  
I do. But how?  
How to help in this rusty red world?  
Here come the dogs, the door-dogs.  
Snarls and yelps slither around the wall, to me.  
Hide? Run?  
I leap onto the couch, I freeze. Head on shoulder  
Shoulder of the teenage girl.  
Do dogs see in color? I cannot remember –  
Earth is so far away.  
Can they see that I am not filmed in dust?  
That my eyes are green – not blue?  
Here they are, and they study.  
One, two, three, four humans on the couch.  
Strange world!  
I am covered in red, red, red, red dust!

Sophia White

## Drumming Fingers

Drumming fingers in ripe agitation,  
I gaze with fevered eyes at the abyss.  
I balance above it precariously,  
Still pretending nothing's amiss.  
But – behind me, the ground is cracking  
And above me the sun dying –  
Oh! My shoelaces need to be tied.  
Fancy that. They'll take hours of tying.  
Distractions will not last for very long,  
And sand runs around my feet, over the brink –  
Disappearing into the blackish Below.  
The sound of it makes it so hard to think!  
The boiling point is close,  
I feel its breath on my neck  
Like the stroke of a ghost  
(My hair's such a wreck!)  
No time for combs!  
The echoing dome  
Of the sky is cracked  
I can't hold back  
Sand runs  
I run  
Leap  
Into  
the  
Dark.

Sophia White

## **Dry Bones**

The well in the desert is dry, dear.  
The well has gone bone dry.  
I try – I try – I try –  
But the desert by the well is dry, dear.

My well has come up dry, dear.  
It's dry as a preacher's till.  
My quill – my quill – my quill –  
The plow's too dead to till, dear.

The sea in my heart is dry, dear.  
My heart is dry and bare.  
Beware – beware – beware –  
The writer's well is bare, dear.

The well of my words is dry dear,  
The well is deadly dry.  
I die – I die – I die –  
The veins in me are dry, dear.

Sophia White

## **Dustlings**

We build a scraper, touch the sky  
Walk in space, make things fly  
We cure disease, hunger too  
Prove that one and one is two  
And yet in all these things  
Forget our own beginning.

We farm the earth, drive our cars  
Predict the rain, name the stars  
Win a medal, shoot a gun  
Write a poem, make a pun  
And yet in all these things  
Forget our own beginning.

We fight our wars, win our fights  
Conquer days, conquer nights  
Raise an army, own the land  
Give our money, lend a hand  
And yet in all these things  
Forget we are mere Dustlings.

Sophia White

## **Each Line That You Write**

Every soul in this world  
Has something within them  
To write.  
And so you, and you too –  
Many write, setting candles  
Alight.

Every word is a glimpse  
Of your soul, of your mind,  
Your world.  
Every line is a strand  
Of memory or hope  
Impearled.

And I read just to find  
What pieces of Soul  
You wrote.  
(Like discovering slowly  
A symphony note  
By note.)

And I learn it is thoughts  
Like yours that tell false  
From true,  
And each line that you write  
Adds another dimension  
To you.

Sophia White

## **Earth Moments: The Dark**

The stars pulse dimly  
High in the charcoal sky  
I exhale  
My breath a frosty cloud  
That rises to join the stars.

The fog envelops the earth  
Making the common seem cruel  
Trees are shadows  
I am lost in the mists  
But never alone.

In the silent darkness  
While the world is far away  
The moon and I  
Stand still  
Regarding one another.

It is so dark  
I can see nothing  
But the night sounds  
The cricket, the stream, the wind,  
Fill the emptiness  
Filling me.

I walk into the night  
Intending a quiet walk  
The cicades erupt like maracas  
I grow angry at their impudence  
Then hear the beauty.

Sophia White

## **Earth Moments: The Flowers**

I pluck a daisy from the roadside  
Enchanted by the simplicity  
Then shamed of my audacity  
Place it gently on the ground

The roses tumble down  
A thousand to a vine  
Almost white -  
But not quite  
I breathe in very slow.

The wildflowers are bundled  
No order, no rhyme  
A mad jumble of blossoms  
I hold them to myself.

I pass the large blooms  
In the garden, in rows,  
Colors matched and neatly planted  
I run away to where  
The wildflowers are spilling.

High on the top of the tree  
One lone flower rests  
I watch from the ground  
Wishing.

Sophia White

## **Earth Moments: The Forest**

I recline beneath the willow tree  
And by the silver pool  
I toss a pebble in the water  
Watch the ripples  
Roll away.

It winds away through the trees  
The trail disappears in the leaves  
Time falls away  
I have no choice, my curiosity  
Takes me away.

Here, the clocks have stopped  
There are only the trees  
The trail  
And me.

The tiny stream hides in the forest  
Alone but for me  
I watch the crystal waters  
Dance over my fingers  
Wondering.

Lying in the deep loam  
With the transparent beech leaves  
Waving to and fro above me  
I am quiet.

Sophia White

## **Earth Moments: The Mighty**

The water roars as it spills  
From the high and rocky cliff  
It echoes through me  
I am ready for anything.

The cavern's maw swallows me  
I pass through rock and stone  
Direction useless  
The cave is an endless abyss  
Where will it take me?

The sea rears up like a beast  
It sees me on the shore  
It lunges forward – falls  
Against the sand  
And I am safe.

I see the mountain towering  
For a moment, fear  
Then I wish to hug  
The great grandfatherly thing  
Alas, I am too small!

The storm falls upon me  
Lightning cracking,  
Thunder rolling, rain falling  
The electric air sizzles  
I laugh with the thrill.

Sophia White

## Elegy

Her hands once held the daffodils  
And gathered up the lilies  
In bundles tied with a lavender string,  
And she'd roam throughout the flow'rs and sing  
A song like flowing water  
This beloved father's daughter  
Whose laugh could make the rose take wing.

Her feet, once bare, roved these hills  
Hills clad in pastel heather  
And nevermore did such a lass  
By the ash and yew grove pass  
That fairest, lily maiden,  
Her arms all flower-laden,  
Cheeks like roses, eyes like glass.

Now she lies beneath the hills  
Beneath the faded flowers,  
Her feet lie still, her cheeks are cold,  
Her eyes are shut, her hands in fold,  
Her song has fallen still  
And silent are the hills,  
Now dark and oh, so dreary to behold.

Sophia White

## **Ephesians 1: 18**

There is a woman with a large red hat  
Who sits and plays the harmonica all day  
Breathing in and breathing out  
Her tears bubbling into the harmonica  
"Woe, woe, woe,  
Woe is me and mine, all the day, all the time.  
Woe, woe, woe."

There is a woman in a tight red dress  
Who writes ballads of her misery by night  
And plays them on her harmonica by day  
Doom and gloom, eyes of aquamaroon,  
Eyes swirling with bitter, bitter spite.  
"Woe, woe, woe. Woe, woe, woe."  
And all around her, round the world goes.  
"Woe, woe, woe." On the world goes.  
The growl of tires on the road  
Drown the moan of the harmonica.  
"Woe..."

Look, Lady Woe! Look up, look in.  
Look further up, further in.  
Look at the rust on your harmonica and then  
Hope, Lady Woe.

There is a man who reads every book  
Who had read all of the books but one  
He smells of libraries and museums and asphalt  
I think he may know everything about the world.  
So much to know!  
"Here's how you fold the flag. That train...  
In 1441... a duke in Naples, or Nice? No, Naples...  
In a hole in the ground there lived a... modern major general."  
Cleverness is very impressive, he knows.  
Impressiveness is power, he knows.  
"Do you know that word? Some engines are...  
The atmospheric pressure at that depth... Mars...  
Largest in history... terrific opera..."  
Dangling ignorance before the bound.  
All talk.

Look, Lord Know! Look up, look in.  
Look further up, futher in.  
Look at what you forgot to read and then  
Hope, Lord Know.

There is a child who roams the hall at school  
And crawls and creeps into the classroom  
There she rises from behind the teacher's desk  
She rises like Kraken from the sea  
And scrapes her nails across the chalkboard  
Poor Teacher! Poor Students!  
Chills, chills, chills from the Kraken-call

The screech of nails on board.  
The child, the nail-scraper, storms out again  
Her eyes like Kraken-eyes, all frozen fire.  
Dagger-looks at everyone, because long, long ago,  
She stared at an empty sea, broken-hearted.  
Now she carries a grudge in her nails  
A grudge for all who try to understand  
Who understand.

Look, Little Sea-child! Look up, look in.  
Look further up, further in.  
Look at the waves which are moving and then  
Hope, Little Sea-child.

Sophia White

## Essence

Fluttering like a thousand paper butterflies  
On a wind that smells of far-off shores  
And hear the repeating melody  
Of a bird whose name we have heard  
But slips past the tongue and hides  
Somewhere in the unconscious.  
A faint taste of citrus, or is it salt?  
No matter; the taste is tangily pleasant.  
Exotic, desirable, but too much  
Will deaden all the senses.  
These are words. This is their essence.  
Whispering by on the tongues  
Of maiden zephyrs and bees  
Evanescent and when you reach  
To grab one, it darts away  
But all the same, you want it that way.  
Somehow, if you caught it,  
You would wish you had not.  
And still, wish softly that you had.  
You do not linger on it, though,  
For their dance is all too enchanting.  
These are words. This is their essence.  
Something like the laughter of children  
Bound up by cords of sunlight  
Sometimes carrying the sweet tears  
That the clouds cry when they're sad  
A tune from a song you once knew  
But have forgotten just enough  
To not know the words –  
Just know that lilting note,  
Repeating, vibrant note  
And you know the words are there in the air.  
These are words. This is their essence.  
In a curious dance around a garden  
That grows flowers of radiance  
You see no shadow fall across the path.  
You see ahead the sunlight, dappling grass.  
Your feet are bare, your hair is in the wind.  
Something soft has melted in the air.  
You know you know that something's there  
But you cannot place your finger on it.  
And that is just how you would have it.  
Yours, but not quite yours, and all the while,  
You know that it belongs to all the world  
And still, somehow, it is only yours.  
These are words. This is their essence.

Sophia White

## **Estranged**

Standing still am I  
With glazed and distant eye  
Hands at my side and still  
Incarnate Mind and Will  
People blur around  
Filling every inch of ground  
Stones rumble with the sound  
A thousand voices all resound  
A chaotic mass of Man  
From every near and distant land  
Humanity in mass array  
Around me spread.

Sun above, Grass below  
Trees sway by Wind blow  
World is as it always was  
Times is as Time does  
Earth in its orbit walks  
As Man keeps stacking Building Blocks  
Making cities built of stone  
Harvesting Earth for his own.  
There am I amid it all  
But blocked by some unseen wall.

A part of World, and yet estranged  
Not part of Earth's unceasing change  
Always looking to the sky  
Feeling different - knowing why  
People 'round me blur and spin  
And I cannot - will not fit in  
My feet have tread these foreign shores  
They are not mine, perhaps they're yours  
But I am not a Child of this World  
Where Humanity is windblown and swirled  
And colors run together in the sand  
I am not a Child of this Land.  
I was made for Somewhere Else  
Somewhere Higher  
Someone Better.  
I am not a Child of this World.

Sophia White

## Evenings in Jazz

This is a pleasant evening,  
Jazzy, in a way that makes you dance.  
If it were a color, I'd call it transparent blue,  
When you could see the reality,  
But it would be different, in a nice way.

Let the music roll on, please,  
And won't you dance with me?  
We've got the hallway and the kitchen  
Open and free, for waltzes,  
Or a wild, stepless spree,  
Or a slow and easy, hold-me-close number.

These moments are so rare, you know.  
Let's steal it for a while.  
Lemonade? I'll make some cookies,  
And we can dance all through the hours,  
'Till we're tired, and then...  
How about a movie?

There's nothing to do 'till tomorrow,  
And I'm in a rare, funny mood.  
I'll put on a skirt that will flare when I twirl,  
And if you won't dance, I'll dance for you  
And you can watch and keep time  
By nodding or tapping the table.

Someday, the world will be made anew,  
And we'll have time enough for anything.  
I hope then, the evenings will be written  
In jazz and dances and lemonade,  
And we can stay up late and enjoy the music  
And keep time when we tire of dance.

Sophia White

## **Fairies Come A-calling**

winter fairies come  
a-calling  
faces pressed window panes  
twinkling  
frost makes lacy prints  
glittering  
light snow pristine pure  
falling  
world young life fresh  
breathing  
winter fairies come  
a-calling

spring fairies come  
a-calling  
birds return twig nests  
building  
flowers open petals pink  
blooming  
fresh life everywhere  
springing  
pink green blue pale  
coloring  
easter eggs painted coats  
hiding  
spring fairies come  
a-calling

summer fairies come  
a-calling  
evenings teem fireflies  
sparkling  
watermelon opens red  
eating  
grass crisps green gold  
waving  
wind soft thunder nights  
lightning  
ocean swim hazy twilights  
fishing  
summer fairies come  
a-calling

autumn fairies come  
a-calling  
colors ripe red gold  
falling  
harvest pumpkins orange  
picking  
apples delicious fresh  
tasting  
leaves underfoot piles

crackling  
autumn fairies come  
a-calling

Sophia White

## **Fairies in the Rushes**

A fairie in the rushes calls my name  
And bids me come and follow him away.  
Would that I could leave my work for play  
And follow little fairies all the day.

A fairie in the rushes grows impatient  
And gives me just until he counts to three  
To decide what my choice will be.  
Would that I could let him entice me.

A fairie in the rushes flits away.  
I could not answer him or I should cry,  
The little fairie creature knew not why.  
Would that I could flee to Gramarye.

Sophia White

## **Fingerprints**

I see His mark writ in the stars  
And in the ocean's roar  
I see His hand among the trees  
And in the eagle's soar.

I see His love in baby birds  
And in the dandelions  
I see His might in waterfalls  
And in the golden lions.

I see His work shine with the sun  
And in the softer moon.  
I see His plans unfold in years  
And know He's coming soon.

I see His name in raging storms  
And in the morning dew,  
But most of all, His fingerprints  
All over me and you.

Sophia White

## **Fisherman at Eve**

The great, melting, golden orb of the sun  
Is sinking like a dying god of yore  
Gazing helpless at its soft reflection  
In the sea that caresses lonely shore.  
There the silhouetted fisherman is standing  
With his net, like the robes of a royal merman,  
In folds and billows around him lying  
As around a king, not a simple layman.  
The silent sea – but for its steady breathing –  
Yellow it is in the dying light  
With waves about the fisher gently heaving  
A giant restless beast awaiting night.  
The reeds along the shoreline lightly sway  
In a breeze that bears the salt-smell of the sea  
Saluting, rather sadly, the dying day  
That sinks into honored tranquility.  
The fisherman breathes deep the evening air  
The salt-smell, the reeds, the sandy shore  
And with hands deeply lined with time and care  
Gathers up his nets to throw once more.

Sophia White

## Flicker

The shore is fast receding into a distant line  
Merging with the sun and the sky tonight  
Here am I, drifting through the sea  
Or could it be  
That it's the sky?  
All I ever knew, all I ever tried  
Comes to nothing, fading with tide.  
Down comes the sun, up goes the moon  
Down come I, to the lonely tune  
Free at last, and oh so alone.  
How could I have ever known?  
To drift free is to drift alone  
To part with the world is forever free to be  
But how could I have ever known?  
Freedom is exactly where I have gone  
But behind it, that curtain of light,  
Oh, the light fades into the loneliest night.  
To be free is to be me  
Alone and drifting through starry seas  
To be free is to never be  
A part of any beautiful heart.  
Here I go, I follow the sun,  
And it deceives me as faster I run  
Behind the earth, beneath the sky  
The sun flickers, fades, and finally dies.  
Is this the story then? The story of all time?  
The sun disappears only to die.  
What about the sunlit land it promised lay there  
Behind the earth, beneath the sky?  
Here I go, I follow the sun,  
But now I know the course that I run  
Is a sunless path away from you.  
So what now? What can I do?  
Keep on running, away from you.  
Maybe they're all wrong, and the earth is still round  
So maybe one day I'll stand on that ground  
Where the shore looks out to an endless sea  
And there you'll stand, waiting for me.

Sophia White

## **Fly-by-Nights**

Captive spirit mine  
That rides a narrow line  
On a unicycle ride  
Every fancy  
Mood is chancy  
Never knowing how I'll side.

Smiles could be frowns  
Up quickly turns to down  
Enslaved to fly-by-nights  
Wills are whims  
Based on him  
A dangerous dance at such a height.

Looking forward for a lifter  
An anchor for a drifter  
Getting high off hoping  
Like hidden drugs  
Beneath the rug  
No idea how I'm coping.

Looking back and finding shame  
Magnifying bygone blame  
Can't drown out past mistakes  
Glance behind  
It's all I find  
One misstep's all it takes.

Yesterday and tomorrow  
Brilliant joy, shameful sorrow  
Consistency is overrun  
Fly-by-nights  
Hold me tight  
A thousand minds as one.

Sophia White

## **For Now**

One day I will be so far  
From home that home will seem  
An unreachable star  
So distant not one soft beam  
Will fall on me.

But for now I'm still at home  
At home in this small town  
For now I'll sit and look around  
And keep my feet on the ground  
For now I'll just be.

One day I'll live so fast  
I'll not have time to reminisce  
The years will all shoot past  
Soaked in sorrows and bliss  
No time for memories.

But for now I'm still young  
And the essences do not elude me  
I can still love the grass and trees  
And savor sweet soliloquy  
For now I'll just be.

Sophia White

## **Forest Friend**

Every day, I packed a sack  
With apples and with tea,  
And skipped through the greenwood  
Whistling happily.

Through the beeches and the elms,  
Beneath the oaks and pines,  
Merrily I made my way  
Through dapple-dimple sunshine.

There beside a rippling stream  
Amid the butterflies  
I met a little forest friend  
With bright and shining eyes.

We talked of this and talked of that  
With time thrown to the wind.  
Never have I known a soul  
Like my forest friend.

When I cried, my wee friend cried,  
And when I laughed, we laughed.  
Life may have been a deadly sea  
But our friendship was our raft.

Then one day, I skipped on down  
The greenwood path again.  
And the stream had all dried up,  
And nowhere was my friend.

Sophia White

## Four Poets

One means never what is said  
Meaningless when first is read  
A is B and B is C  
But when he speaks, A is Z  
Metaphor and simile.

Two writes with a blazing pen  
Tears, then laughs, and tears again.  
Passion flames in every word  
To some they're odd, to some absurd  
In each stroke, heartbeats are heard.

Three is here and everywhere  
You'll never know what you'll find there  
A comic line, a philosophy  
A romance or a parody  
Creative words and imagery.

Four sits and dreams, and writes not  
But slowly sifts through abstract thought  
No words flow, no poems spring  
She waits to write just one thing  
From life one crown jewel to wring.

So One writes his mysteries  
And Two writes intensities  
Three writes every sort of rhyme  
And Four just waits and wastes her time  
Awaiting masterpiece sublime.

Sophia White

## **Fragrant Night**

Fragrant night  
(Cool, crisp air laden with blossoms)  
Somber light  
(Bright round moon sends silver caresses)  
Whispering trees  
(Oaks and pines engage in a slow dance)  
Slumbering breeze  
(Wind flows as though it goes half-asleep)  
Beautiful stars  
(Bristling the sky with a thousand soft lights)  
Rumbling cars  
(Tearing the night to slivers as they interrupt)

Sophia White

## **Free!**

I knew it not  
But my hand was tied behind my back  
Cruelly.

Then someone came  
And with a little tug and push untied it  
Truly!

Now I'm running  
Again outrunning the wind and sunshine  
Sighing.

Here I go!  
Watch me shred the grass beneath my wings!  
Flying!

The world is behind  
The sun is set before me in radiance  
Shining.

I'm soaring wild!  
And soon on golden apples I shall be  
Dining!

Sophia White

## **Frenzy!**

Blue  
Shoe  
Right  
Night  
Calm  
Qualm  
Me  
Tree  
Felt  
Pelt  
Sin  
Win  
Rhyme  
Time  
Dumb  
Thumb  
Stop  
Top  
Can't  
Pant!  
Help!  
Whelp  
Words  
Herds  
Won't  
Don't  
Cease  
Lease  
Please  
Wheeze  
Take  
Make  
Fit  
It  
End  
Friend  
Whew  
(Pew)

Sophia White

## **Galoshesless**

I'm gallivanting happily  
With nary a smidgen of care  
Through rainforest serendipity  
And flowers fill the air.

The ground is rather muddy  
From all the gobs of rain  
E'en so, who could study  
When the wild fills the brain?

I'm stomping without reason  
Intoxicated with abandon  
And, wow, the world is pleasin'  
When you see it all as random.

I'm traipsing like a madman  
Without galoshes to my name  
And let the wild wetness in!  
I've got the world to tame!

Sophia White

## **Geiriau**

Ah, they tumble out, they go,  
In streams, in currents, in rivers they flow.  
Gushing like water from spring's first rain,  
To water the earth and return once again.  
Ah, they prance and they cavort away  
To seek out their places in some foreign lay.  
Away, alone or in pairs or in herds,  
My children, my lovers, my essence, my words.

Sophia White

## **Gibbous Over Wood**

The moon is not yet grown -  
It is at the doorstep of maturity.  
But still its light comes down  
Through the broadleaf wood.  
Here and there, a leaf is silver,  
Chosen favorite of the moon,  
While the other trees shiver  
In the dark with envy.  
The moon is not yet grown -  
It is brilliant in its youth.  
It is to the sun a mirror  
And to the sky a mouth.  
There is a light about a tree  
A white wedding-gown,  
Shall the moon wed the tree  
Before it is yet grown?  
The moon is not yet grown -  
It is confident, though,  
And shines with great spirit,  
Piercing the wood through.  
There is a path across the river,  
Wrought in silver stone.  
The moon mocks the walker  
Who takes the path and drowns.

Sophia White

## **Girls**

They move in flocks.  
Like geese or like chickens.  
Clucking to themselves,  
Cackling with laughter.  
Their heels scratching across the pavement.

They preen as they go.  
Pecking and smoothing,  
Everything in place.  
They strut through the world  
Flaunting their many-colored feathers.

I sit well apart,  
Aloof from the flocks.  
Not another kind,  
Just a different sort,  
Mocking them behind my poetry.

Sophia White

## **Good Work in Me**

'being confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ' - Phil.1: 6

My eyes were opened yesterday -  
The second time in years.  
I should have known that if I prayed  
An answer would unfold.

A finger touched my shoulder and  
I know I felt the touch  
Of a gentle and a guiding hand  
Prodding me to Him.

And I saw the teary eyes  
And I saw the reaching hands  
And I saw the broken hearts  
of children.

My hearts was broken yesterday -  
The second time in years.  
Before me opened a certain Way  
That I'd been looking for.

A voice whispered in my ear  
I know I heard a voice.  
Though physically I did not hear  
I felt the words so very clear.

And I saw the teary eyes  
And I saw the reaching hands  
And I saw the broken hearts  
of children.

Wait, little ones, beloved of God.  
Wait, for I am coming.

Sophia White

## **Goodbye Stewie, Enjoy Hawaii**

Your dad was our youth leader  
The funniest guy  
Your mom the Philipino  
Somewhat shy.

You were just between our ages –  
My sister and me –  
And as funny and great a kid  
As you could be.

I remember Barbies, and no TV,  
But I'm afraid  
I can't remember much beyond that  
We played.

I remember, vaguely, a Christmas village  
Behind some doors,  
And a story about an airport – was it my dad  
Or yours?

But most of all, kid, I can recall  
You smiling  
And how often you made me laugh.  
You were beguiling.

Then you flew away on a plane  
To Hawaii  
To live and be far, so far away.  
Goodbye Stewie.

Sophia White

## Gossip

Taste the News, the juicy words  
They roll so pleasantly across the tongue  
Such delight, satisfaction, in the Knowing.  
A furtive giggle, a sly glance, oft askance,  
Oh, feel the inward pleasure therein derived!  
Pass it on – only one person – tell them:  
'A secret! Don't tell anyone.'  
You know better, as does your confidant.  
For the next day, the headlines blare the News.  
You look away, 'Well, I never! You don't say! '  
But there beneath the façade of shock, smug smile.  
And the deep, ling'ring joy of having the honor  
Of being the First One to Tell!  
And you don't see the eyes, the aching eyes,  
On the pained and tearstreaked face  
Of the one of whom you gossiped.

Sophia White

## Grandmother

When I see you in my mind, this is what I see:  
A lady clothed in scarlet robes by a glinting sea.  
She sings a gentle song that catches setting sun  
And turns it into liquid notes as if by angels spun.  
As up and down the silver strand the crystal waters run.

All along the shining shore the sea birds wheel and cry  
Their anthems join in harmony with ocean's tender sigh  
And together praise the Lady and her spirit fair  
They exalt her gentle smile and her loving air.  
And she wears a silver crown upon her shining hair.

"No wiser sage! " the gulls all cry. "None wiser can be found!  
Purest wisdom! " The sky is rippling with the sound.  
"No gentler lamb! No sweeter spring! No grander mountain tall! "  
All day the birds wheel to and fro, sea dances to their call.  
"The Lady is indeed the noblest queen of all! "

She bows her head with bashful grin and tosses silver bread.  
The setting sun makes a crimson crown about the Lady's head  
As the sea birds dip for crumbs that fall from the Lady's hand.  
Her steps leave silver footprints impressed upon the sand.  
Leave a trail to follow – the truest in the land.

Sophia White

## **Happenstance**

I was here.  
There you were.  
You a him,  
I a her.

First you spoke.  
I replied.  
We were both  
Alike inside.

I went here.  
You went there.  
Strange – we met  
Everywhere.

Going there?  
I am too!  
What a chance –  
I'll join you.

Odd how things  
Are that way.  
Happenstance?  
(Grin.) No way.

Sophia White

## Happy

It is frightening – to be so happy  
You can hardly keep from crying.  
And even more so, when you find  
Joy in inconsequential things,  
And all the things that matter  
Are twisted and terribly wrong.

It is strange, when happiness rebels  
Against its normal sources,  
And when it grows to tempestuously strong  
That no sorrow can overcome it.  
So rarely do I find joy more deadly  
Than sorrow. It is strange.

Yet even though I cannot understand  
Why my heart flies and my mind reels  
With utter and yet unreasonable joy,  
I can still love it and be happy,  
And with a smile, toss my head  
At any critic, years hence, who may  
Discard these words in disgust,  
Muttering, "There is no joy as this,  
And it is sentimental fantasy."

What need have I of critics' accolade?  
Even they cannot dampen my spirit.

Sophia White

## Heroica

A lad in brown, from a country town,  
Asked the roving peddler:  
" 'Scuse me, sir, but I wonder  
If you could show me the way to Heroica.

My mother said upon her deathbed  
'Son, if you wish to be great  
You must journey far in search of a star  
Of a place known as only Heroica.

And I've roved the land as much as I can  
In sunshine and in shadow.  
I've been here and there and I reckon everywhere  
But I just cannot find Heroica.

Mama said to me, 'If it's great you'll be,  
You'd best get going on.  
Run hard and long and do no wrong  
And one day you'll reach Heroica.'

Well, I've run and run, but found not one  
Place that could be what I seek.  
I reckon it's fair with a colorful flair  
This place known only as Heroica.

I'm sure its grand as no other land  
Has been or ever will be.  
I seek my destiny in this land of harmony  
Known only as Heroica.

But it must be far, this land like a star  
And farther than I'd thought it would be.  
So could you give a hand and point out the land  
That is known only as Heroica? "

And the peddler laughed as if he were daft  
And said, "Boy, you're a fool.  
You've been running up and down in search of a town  
Known only as Heroica.

Well, I'll tell you straight, there ain't no gate  
That'll pass into any such place.  
Your ma, she was right, but you took flight  
Without ever understanding Heroica.

It's not a place to which you race  
Not a land or a field or a stone.  
It's who you are, not where you are,  
That's the real and only true Heroica."

Sophia White

## Home

Through two doors.  
Rows of books.  
Swinging door.  
Eleven to pause.  
Eleven to top.  
At double doors  
Pause and stop  
Turn off phone.  
Then go in.  
Going home  
Through double doors.  
I'm home again  
On upper floor.

Sophia White

## Hope, Answers

Listen!  
He is calling you.  
The voice you have heard many times in the silence...  
Listen.

You have seen trouble, dear one, and pain.  
You have walked the trail of tears again and again.  
You have been looking, haven't you, for hope?  
He is holding it out for you to take.  
You have long been confused, have you not?  
Looking for answers in a world gone dark.  
You have searched your every desperate thought  
For a glimmer of hope, a shard of truth.  
Truth, my beloved, is found not in Man.  
You are lost in a desolate land,  
Hopeless, and weary, wanting rest.  
Come lay your head on His breast  
And enter into Love, wandering one.  
You have heard his voice often in the night  
When the world is asleep, or in the pale dawn.  
Truth. Answers. Hope. Love. Only One  
Can give them to you and only His will last.  
Take His hand and hear his voice, dear heart,  
And in His arms and sight be blessed.

Sophia White

## Hot Air Balloons

Here are my troubles  
In neat little rows  
All put in baskets  
And tied up with bows.  
Here are my worries  
In wicker and rope.  
No longer to dampen  
My heart and my hope.  
I tie them all soundly  
So they'll never fall  
To hot air balloons  
With no ballast at all.

Oh!  
Away they go!

Sophia White

## Hot Summer Afternoon

I'll paint a perfect afternoon in Georgia,  
When the sun is steaming in the sky:  
I am sitting alone on the veranda  
Made of glass walls eight feet high  
And a ceiling hung with fans which whirl  
And mix the air cooled by electricity.  
The grass outside the room is yellow-green  
And rich and deep, a carpet for a king.  
The trees are stately, lifting up their leafy crowns  
To an azure sky mottled with white clouds.  
Inside, where I am half-lying down,  
It is cool and quiet all around.  
By my hand: the iciest of mint teas.  
By my other hand: a book half-read through.  
Some assorted fruit, and chocolate cookies,  
And nothing else in the world to do.

Sophia White

## **How Bright!**

How bright! How bright  
The stars are tonight!  
Twinkling sensations  
In jollification.

How bright! How bright  
is their merry light.  
A canopy of song,  
A wondrous fine throng.

How bright! How bright  
Are these maidens of night.  
They dance through the dark  
On a bright little lark.

How bright! How bright!  
I think I might  
Stay up all night  
Marvel at the sight!

Sophia White

## **I Bow to None**

I bow to none that walk the earth  
No man or beast or demon.  
I bow alone to God above  
Who made the earth and heavens.

I bow to none that whisper lies  
That haunt the darkened brush.  
I bow alone to God, Yahweh,  
Who came to earth in flesh.

I bow to none that deal out power  
Who lure with gold or land.  
I bow alone to God, the Maker  
Who holds me in His hand.

I bow to none that bow to me  
Who entice with honeyed flattery.  
I bow alone to God the Father  
Who has defeated diablerie.

I bow to none, I bow to none  
I bow to none but Him alone.  
I bow alone to God the King  
Who has claimed me as His own!

Sophia White

## **I Cannot**

I cannot stay to wear the chains.  
I cannot keep my life in death!  
I cannot lock my dreams away,  
Not for pain, not for pain.

I cannot ignore a Summons.  
I cannot dropp my vision.  
I cannot change direction.  
Not for tears, not for tears.

I cannot turn my ship around.  
(As small a ship it be.)  
I cannot lose sight of the goal!  
Not for sighs, not for sighs.

I cannot chop a sapling down.  
I cannot lie down on the ground.  
I cannot give up without a sound.  
Not for loss, not for loss.

I cannot plug the leaping spring.  
I cannot stop for anything.  
I am Called, Called to sing.  
Not for you, if this is you.

I cannot.

Sophia White

## **I Don't Know**

The sky is low and thick with clouds of despair  
And I – I wait. For what? I don't know.  
The world is wet and damp with rains of tears.  
And I – I hope. For what? I don't know.  
I don't know.  
I wait. I hope.  
I don't know why I bother trying to cope.  
Screams shatter dreams  
Hopes are withered in storms of doubt.  
And look – there is no way out.  
The moon is hard and cruel with senseless hate.  
And I – I dream. For what? I don't know.  
The lovely painting that was once my life  
Runs and blurs and streams with tears  
And still I try to see what once was there.  
Why? I don't know. I wish I did.  
But the beauty's been so cleverly hid.  
I fear – I dare not believe it –  
But I fear it has been lost forever.  
The ties of yesterday are severed  
And all the wrong knots have come undone.  
How is it that the dark has won?  
I don't know.  
I wish with heart and soul and mind I did but -  
I don't know.

Sophia White

## **I Don't Want to Be Here**

I've tried to tell you many times  
Without telling you outright.  
If you hear, you must refuse,  
I'd had an idea you might,  
For the idea itself would bruise.

Here it is in plain old words  
Since you don't seem to understand,  
And I know you'll never read this  
You won't, e'en though you can,  
Despite any past made promise:

I don't want to be here.  
I never ever did.  
I don't want to stay in this  
Spiritually sorbid  
Sludge.

I don't want to be here.  
I cannot stand the lies.  
I can take the hate no more  
Beneath the simpering guise  
You wear.

I don't want to be here.  
Just let me go!  
I don't know why you want me  
You didn't want it so  
Anyway.

I've tried to ask you many times.  
Each time, I could not succeed.  
I ask it now in this rhyme  
That I know you'll never read.  
Perhaps I'll ask again sometime.  
Perhaps.

Sophia White

## **I Found it All**

What I learned in vivid dreams  
What I saw in gold sunbeams  
What I felt in streaming rain  
What I wove in daisy chains  
What I read in starry skies  
I found it all in your bright eyes.

What I read in written word  
What I in flutes and cellos heard  
What I saw writ in the seas  
What I felt 'mid tow'ring trees  
What I breathed in red sunrise  
I found it all in your bright eyes.

Sophia White

## **I Long With Blood and Bone To Carve My Name**

I long, with blood and bone, to carve my name  
Deep into the tree of glowing thought;  
To set my words in wood eternal grown  
So deep that time cannot wear them away.  
My blood and bone cry out with years of longing  
Trembling, aching, yearning with each breath  
To make a mark in time that time can't touch.  
Every day sees my heart grow stronger  
In resolve to carry out this task,  
But every day sees time grow all the stronger  
Determined to crush me back to earth.  
My carving knives I clench between my teeth  
And stand at the foot of that glorious tree,  
Gazing up at the place I have chosen for me  
But still I stand deep entrenched in mire:  
The mire and murk of time holds me down.  
And every day we each of us grow stronger,  
Time in its resolve, my heart in mine,  
And neither giving sway unto the other  
Nor breaking free in triumph all at once.  
And yet, though we stay head-on-head,  
Time is the wiser, and I the weak,  
For time knows it need not pull ahead  
But stay just strong enough to hold me back.  
If I cannot beat it down ere long,  
My longing then will all have been in vain.  
If I could just beat it down and climb,  
And carve with mighty strokes upon that tree,  
Then will I at last greet time and sleep.  
But if I fail, and the mire draws me in,  
I shall sleep uneasy for all time.

Sophia White

## **I Used To Sit With Many Friends**

I used to sit with many friends  
Long into the night,  
And talk and sing, and dance sometimes,  
All in the fire's light.  
But one by one, they rose and turned,  
And walked into the wood,  
Away from us, away from me,  
Gone away for good.  
Then there was me, and only me,  
By the fire, all alone,  
Wondering if they had left,  
Or was it I had gone?

Sophia White

## **I Want a Wind**

I want a wind  
To start in the far-off mountain  
To rush down in a raging fury  
And fill this dull and silent valley.  
I want a wind  
To wrap around the gray tree trunks  
To rattle the leaves and grass  
To whistle by the window's glass.  
I want a wind  
To make the pine trees clack together  
To tangle the hair of the Barbie girls  
To make the dust on the roads to swirl.  
I want a wind  
To take the litter on the sidewalk away  
To blow the mist from the falls my way  
To echo throughout this listless day.  
I want a wind  
To burst through the window and into here  
To scatter the papers from their neat piles  
To steal my breath and give me smile.

Sophia White

## **I Was A Girl With Wings**

I had a dream; I was a girl with wings.  
Huge wings made of pure white feathers  
I could wrap around me to stay warm  
Or to hide; I often had to hide.  
I could fly, and how I loved to fly,  
With my swan wings through the crystal skies,  
The earth was just another place I knew of,  
No cage, no tether holding me in thrall.  
I had huge, white wings and I could fly.  
What more did I desire? Nothing more.  
But my wings and the open sky.

Sophia White

## **I, the Poet**

All that there is that is me  
Are the words that I write fervidly.  
My soul only finds my poor vagrant mind  
In the phrases it feverishly pens.

My world is a very small book  
Hardly worth a second look.  
Some fragmented lines and pitiful rhymes  
Coalesce in my mournful eyes.

A lizard gnaws on its tail;  
As such, I retrace my trail.  
Reading again the fruit of my pen  
Bitterly reliving the tears.

What a sad little person am I,  
So long gone I forget how to try  
To look outside and see how wide  
The sky can be at noon.

Sophia White

## **If I Could...**

If I could live where ever I chose,  
I'd live in an Abbey by a dusty road,  
With mice and squirrels, otters too,  
With hedgehogs, moles, and 'licious food.  
I'd live at Redwall Abbey.

If I could be whoever I chose  
I'd be a fire-friend from Inkworld  
And dance with flames all the day  
And not be burned by their blazing play.  
I'd be Dustfinger.

If I could do whatever I chose  
I'd leave all trappings of the ground  
And soar like a bird, no - a breeze,  
Light and in the wild blue, free.  
I'd fly like Superman.

If I could go wherever I chose,  
I'd vanish into my own words  
With Pegasi wrapped in pure sensation  
I'd meet my own creations.  
I'd go to Tirel.

If I could meet whoever I chose,  
I'd meet a tall and hoary man  
Who knew the secrets of the world  
An ancient, everlasing Old One.  
I'd meet Merlin, Merriman Lyon.

If only I could!

Sophia White

## **If Only**

The trees are columns today.  
They are clothed in glassy green silk.  
Up and up they tower  
Above me and my little dreams.  
A canopy they form with stained glass leaves  
In which the breezes play hide-and-seek.  
I play hide-and-seek with my shadow.  
Butterflies flutter past lazily.  
The stream ripples like liquid glass.  
Oh, all is right with the world to-day.  
All is right with the world.

If only the world were like this.

Sophia White

## **If You Mean to Speak**

If you are going to speak, sirrah,  
Then by all that's fair, do speak!  
Leave not your statements weak!  
If you mean to speak, sirrah,  
Then, by Jove, man! Speak!

Leave me not with cryptic verse,  
Or a hasty word said in farewell,  
Telling me that all's not well,  
Leaving me with need to curse!  
What you mean to say – Tell!

Words spliced in half are so unkind  
When you take the other half away,  
Sentences in such disarray!  
The rest locked in your secretive mind.  
For pity's sake and more man! Say!

Do not walk away with words unsaid.  
I say, sirrah, that's quite unfair!  
You leave some hanging in the air,  
But the key to them in your head.  
Hold nothing back, sirrah! Declare!

Sophia White

## **I'll Just Start Walking**

So much time spent seeking  
Not enough time for faith.  
If I don't stop looking  
I'll never find the way.  
I'll just start walking  
And trust that I won't fall.  
His promises aren't conditional,  
I'm not saved by my call.  
I'll just start walking  
By faith and faith alone,  
For earth is merely fleeting,  
Heaven is my home.  
I don't know what to do  
Or where on earth to go.  
I'll just start walking,  
Faith doesn't have to know.  
I won't just sit here,  
Gnawing nails and moaning  
Because I don't have a crystal ball  
That tells me just what's coming.  
I'll just start walking  
As best as I know how,  
It's no use waiting any longer  
Or wallowing in doubt.  
I'll just start walking,  
Yes, I'll just start walking.  
Is that not faith, anyway?  
I'll just start walking.

Sophia White

## **Impudent Me**

I ask You to reveal Yourself to me,  
To make me know Your true and mighty Form.  
In doing so I might ask the sky  
To set on me a great and deadly storm.

How dare I, a mortal being, seek  
A treasure far too great for human eyes?  
I, the finite dustling, dare to ask.  
I, the sinner, hiding in a pious guise.

Instead I ask that You would merely show  
Your will, that I might follow every word.  
For of You Yourself in all your power:  
No eye has seen nor any ear has heard.

Sophia White

## **In the Hall of the Giants**

The gilded halls stretch ever on, into dusty history,  
And I yearn – how I yearn – to explore them.  
To press my hands on the cold, hard shields  
That line the tall and thick stone walls.  
The columns that march down endlessly  
Are made of gold, and have names  
Bored into them, deep, unmistakable, and everlasting.  
(Some I know well, some not at all, but I will soon)  
And long lines of poetry and prose wind like vines  
Up and down the columns, and along the ceiling,  
Enticing me to follow them down the torch-lit passages  
That branch away to every pole. And I yearn to – I must!  
So also I yearn to take up an axe and smash  
The hourglass that hangs over my shoulder,  
With its weight that makes me sink into the bronze floor  
With the knoll of every bell, the roll of every hour...  
And though the lines of words stretch into eternity and beckon,  
I only sink further into the earth, until the floor closes over me,  
And the gilded hall, the names, the lines, are lost to sight.

Sophia White

## **In Tirel!**

In Tirel! In Tirel!  
I can hear the beat of wings,  
Feathered wings of white.  
I can hear the Pegasus wings,  
In the starlit, moonlit night.  
I can hear the tapping hooves,  
Obsidian hooves so light.  
I can hear the Satyr hooves,  
Flashing dark yet bright.  
I can hear the ring of horns,  
Spiraled horns of gold.  
I can hear the unicorn horns,  
A thousand ages old.  
I can hear the rustling wings,  
Wings light and small but bold.  
I can hear the fairy wings,  
Under fern leaves fresh unrolled.  
In Tirel! In Tirel!  
I can see the shining city,  
The city grand and rare.  
I can see Myana city,  
With her winsome air.  
I can see the dancing people,  
People tall and fair.  
I can see the Tirelan people,  
With garlands in their hair.  
I can see the splashing fountain,  
The alabaster fountain bright.  
I can see the Pegasi Fountain,  
Tossing water skilled and light.  
I can see the sparkling castle,  
The castle of pearls all white.  
I can see Tira Castle,  
The most astounding sight.  
In Tirel! In Tirel!  
O the sun is never far,  
The Wind is never cold,  
And the rain is friends with the light  
In Tirel so green and bold.  
O the night is never dark,  
The winter never cruel,  
And the Spring knows Autumn's name  
In Tirel where the Wintonwi rule.  
In Tirel!  
In Tirel!

Sophia White

## **Inebriation**

High on the stony mountain,  
Swathed in fog,  
Sounds a chilling, lonely gong.  
I wander through the valleys,  
Through the villages and trees,  
And past still pools,  
Searching for somewhere I lost.

Far beyond those mountains,  
Once it lay,  
My somewhere, that I forgot  
In the bottom of a glass.  
I left there, and my mind was full  
Of that mountain fog,  
And now I cannot remember where 'twas.

There was sunlight there,  
Of this I am certain.  
No misty valleys, no clouded hills.  
It was flat, and full of light,  
And clouds, and dancing people.  
But I lost it,  
And I fear I shall never return.

Sophia White

## **Is All Well?**

Is all well? Is all well?  
Why so silent rest the bells?  
There is no one to tell,  
As I sit, a shudder quell.

I wonder inward – is all right?  
Whence came this sudden, silent night?  
Better it is, to fume and fight,  
Anything but an icy spite.

Was it me? What did I say?  
Answers falter and delay.  
All is well, I hope, I pray,  
The world is just not right today.

How now? Bitter flow the hours,  
As heavens high threaten showers,  
Absence grows long and dour,  
Worse an empty stare than glower.

Twisting knots so deep inside –  
I can no longer anguish hide.  
I loathe this endless, falling ride,  
And wonder at presumptuous pride.

Sophia White

## **It Was on a Night of Fog I Died**

It was on a night of fog I died,  
And I remember just one thing:  
How the mists were white.  
In wraithlike beauty, they sat  
Upon the roads and the fields,  
Coiling around trees and corners,  
All around me.  
I am not even certain they were mists,  
But suspect, instead, the ghosts  
Of many from the past who  
Died within a pallid shroud,  
Within a lovely, earthbound cloud,  
Just like me.  
It comes back clearer to me now,  
And I recall their folded hands  
Which slowly rose to greet me  
As the ghosts drew near to meet me.  
I remember how the air went stiff  
As they took my hands in theirs  
To welcome me.

Sophia White

## **It's A Big World, After All**

The world is so big.

My crayon sketchings of what I once thought the world to be  
Are like a single lily fallen upon the entire sea.  
The cerulean sky I had scrawled with such eager anticipation  
Is nothing like that gray-blue whiteness now above me,  
And slowly a static numbness replaces my former elation.

The world is so big.

The trees are not the brown I thought they were before,  
Nor do they have a dozen green leaves – nay, hundreds more!  
The birds are not M's and the houses don't have triangular roofs.  
The people aren't two dimensionally simplistic anymore.  
This old Crayola depiction has become more of a spoof.

The world is so big.

Now I have to write with mechanical pencils and ballpoint pens,  
And they have no color to speak of in them.  
They write in a strange blackish-gray, the color of the pavement,  
A color that I did not have in my box, back then,  
A color that hid, I suppose, in the darkest corner of the darkest basement.

The world is so big.

Sophia White

## Je Ne Sais Quoi

Leaning against the wall,  
Twirling my jacket's cord  
Round my graceful fingers.  
Looking tragically bored,  
With a delicate turn of lip.  
One foot `cross the other  
Toe down, heel up.  
Wondering why I even bother.  
A slow yawn in back of hand,  
Long blink, like an owl.  
Eyes sliding over the land  
With utter disinterest.  
Daring the awed hoi poloi  
To step to and and say hello.  
Reservedly dark, darkly coy,  
Staring the world down my nose.  
One brow raised, asking if  
They really think they're all that fine,  
If they dare compete with this.  
With final melancholy sigh,  
Lethargically walk away,  
Mysterious, serene am I,  
Suavely off to some soiree.  
Let them all wonder why.  
I don't care to live or die.  
I'll take it all with a tragic sigh.  
Well-practiced in this art am I.

Sophia White

## **LeslieAnn**

Wee LeslieAnn, my bonny lass  
Face of finest, rosy glass  
Curls of silk, or satin thread  
So soft, so light, so fine, so red  
How old are ye, my rosy lass?  
Ye are but two? Ah, me, alas!  
If ye were but twenty and two  
Why, lass, I think I'd marry you.

Sophia White

## Library Laze

Sure, I love a library  
When I'm feeling green.  
But when I'm orange  
A library  
Is not the place to be.

Why's the world so cold outside?  
I really want to play.  
But the wicked  
Winter ate  
My vibrant sunny days.

So I'm stuck in all these books  
Who scream at me with glee:  
'Get to work  
You lazy thing  
Your time does not come free! '

How fine it is, and fine indeed  
That I'm so well rehearsed  
In the art  
Of Ignore  
In procrastination aptly versed!

Sophia White

## Lingering in a Train Station

Sitting in the station; waiting for the train  
Shoes wet from leftover puddles  
The vestiges of last night's rain  
Everyone walking past looks muddled  
But I'm seeing so very clear  
Clear-cut plan mapped out in mind  
Gonna ride that train so far from here.

The two o'clock comes roaring in  
Tickets flash as the whistle blares  
Blurring past me go suited men  
With inward, blank, and sullen stares  
Not this one this isn't mine  
I'll wait around a little more  
I've got no money but I've got time.

The two thirty takes a short respite  
And more rushing feet go by me  
The platform's crowded; space is tight  
And no familiar faces that I can see.  
The strangers come and go and fade  
My memory can hold not a single face  
The two thirty left, but still I stayed.

The day runs on, the trains run on  
Dusk rolls in like a final breath  
I pick up my coat and put it on  
The night is cold and still as death.  
One weak light flickers and gasps  
From a tall post near the empty station's end  
And far down the line another train rasps.

It slowly, wearily screeches to the platform  
Sighing like a great, tired beast  
Within it's depths, I spy a form  
Vague and lovely and fast asleep.  
I stand up in the lone light's meager ray.  
My bench, like an old friend,  
Bids silent farewell as I ride away.

Sophia White

## Little Girl

When she walks outside into the golden light  
Her bare feet tickled by the daffodils  
Her blue eyes open wide and shine so bright.

To her the sky is bluer than ever before  
To her the clouds were custom-made just for her  
To her the sun's a golden face that smiles just for her  
And to her the world is right in every way.  
And to her the world is right in every way.

Little girl, don't you grow up.  
Little girl, don't you ever change.  
Little girl, the world is at your doorstep.  
Just reach out your little fingers  
Take it all!

To her the berries on the bush are candy  
To her the fish in the pond are jewels  
To her the birds in the sky are angels  
And to her life couldn't be better than today.  
And to her life couldn't be better than today.

Little girl, don't you hurry.  
Little girl, don't you worry.  
Little girl, joy is the mailbox  
Nothing can stop you  
Just run out and take it all!

To her the flowers are all defining color  
To her the trees are just waiting to be climbed  
To her the woods are full of hidden wonders  
And to her the world is full of magic lights.  
Her world is shining bright with magic lights!

Little girl, don't stop believing.  
Little girl, don't let the wonder pass you by.  
Little girl, those magic lights are yours.  
Take it all, little girl.  
Take it all!

Little girl, don't you grow up.  
Little girl, don't you ever change.  
Little girl, the world is at your doorstep.  
Just reach out your little fingers  
Take it all!  
Take it all!

Sophia White

## Liyelah

Her gown  
Like  
    falling  
        stars  
cascading as a river  
    cascading over stones  
stones like diamonds

Her hair  
Like  
    rippling  
        silk  
undulating as an ocean  
    undulating silkily  
silk made of soot

Her eyes  
Like  
    glinting  
        rubies  
burning as a fire  
    burning fiercely  
fierce as a tiger

Her world  
Like  
    secret  
        corners  
dark as thieves  
    dark like ether  
darker than evil - and so fair.

Sophia White

## **Magic**

It is the "stuff of legends"  
Not real.  
Would that it were.  
Oh, would!  
I wish I could employ it  
Only once!  
To make everything  
Everything – Right.  
But  
It it only  
Stuff of Legends.

Sophia White

## **Mair Enchanted**

Mair roved the heath'ry, rolling hills  
That danced above the sea  
And played the silver harp so sweet  
Beneath a lone yew tree.

Her high cheek like rosen blooms  
Her eye a velvet blue  
Her locks the deepest crackling black  
Her lips a crimson hue.

Mair played her harp and walked the hills  
Her soul was ever singing  
Her song did court the wilding sea  
And set the sky a-ringing.

She sang of heroes spun in gold  
She sang of highwaymen  
She sang of maidens passing fair  
She sang of Oberon.

Mair made the heavens clash with joy  
Her song enchanted thunder  
And with her lilting melody  
Could tear the skies asunder.

Her voice like moonlight spun to sound  
Her voice like flowing light  
Her voice like rivers rushing down  
Her voice like mountains' might.

Mair lulled the sea to dreamless sleep  
Whene'er her voice turned soft  
Her whispers rose from pale green hills  
To craggy mountain loft.

Her song a chant for dying kings  
Her song a lightning thread  
Her song a lullaby to live  
Long after the world is dead.

Sophia White

## **Making Sandwiches!**

A little ham  
A little cheese  
A little pickle  
Voila!

Now you know  
How utterly bored  
And exhausted  
I am.

Sophia White

## Mask Maker

I sit all day on my cool bench  
And make many marvelous masks.  
I take some of this, and some of that,  
And form fabulous fairie faces.

I snip and sew, glue and paint,  
And my characters come alive.  
They dance and sing, and delight  
The wide-eyed, watching world.

They laugh and clap, call my name  
And I smile soft and sadly.  
They do not know how I cry  
At night, when the show is done.

How I wish I were my own self.  
But how I cannot be,  
For I make so many, many masks  
I have lost myself in them.

I am a writer. I have my words.  
I have a host of characters.  
But so real are my characters  
I have lost me.

So all I have left to give  
The wide-eyed, watching world  
Are shades and shadows of who I am  
Because I have lost me.

Sophia White

## Melancholy

Today I decided I did not need you.  
That I am strongest alone.  
That, contrary to my former convictions,  
You are not necessary to my breathing.  
You are not the anchor holding me in place,  
Or the ballast which holds me down.  
I discovered that I am complete in myself,  
And you are only an remainder to my dividend.  
I am a tree, with roots, trunk, and branches  
While you are just the grass around me  
Or the nest set into my branches.  
I do not need you. Why did I ever think I did?  
You are not, as I once thought, my better half,  
Because I am two halves, a whole, without you.  
You are not the ocean and I the land,  
For I am the earth. You may be the moon.  
We are not two pieces to a puzzle,  
But I am the whole puzzle, and every piece  
Is a piece of me, and you are not a piece at all.  
I am I, myself, am me. I am perfectly One.  
With you, I am still only me, as I am.  
I am the same heart, same soul, same mind.  
You are only an accessory I do not need.  
Today I discovered all of these truths,  
And now, having learned and understood them,  
I may truly love you.

Sophia White

## Metaphor I

Life is a slide.  
You climb up, you fight to be first.  
You end up last.  
You get a black eye.  
You don't care.  
You go down – whee!  
But then look where you are.  
The bottom.  
So what do you do,  
You bright, clever thing?  
You run right back around  
And do it again.  
What's the use?  
Look where you end up every time –  
The bottom.  
Then it's another black eye,  
And when you run out of eyes,  
It's your ear, your nose,  
Maybe your front teeth.  
You stub your toe on the way up.  
But you keep climbing.  
Oh! They tell you.  
You're so persevering!  
You try again and again!  
Like Churchill said,  
Never give up!  
You are so brave! They say.  
You carry on thinking you've the world to conquer.  
You reach the top and think you've conquered it.  
Veni vidi vici! You cry!  
And then – throw yourself down the slide.  
Whee! You shout.  
Then BUMP! Look where you are.  
Yes.  
The bottom.  
I ask you why?  
Why climb again?  
Why waste your eyes  
Your ears, your nose?  
Your front teeth?  
Why fool yourself with that false victory  
And throw yourself down  
Down – down – down –  
BUMP!  
To the bottom.  
Why?  
I'll tell you why.  
Because as long as you're down at the bottom –  
You can still go up!

Sophia White

## Metaphor II

Life is paper; we are pens.  
A story to write we must  
Will you write a poem?  
Or perhaps a sonnet?  
What about tales  
Of frogs in blue bonnets?  
Or a conglomeration  
Of witty falsehoods?  
Or a long narration  
Of those who have stood  
For freedom and truth  
And other such things?  
Or a limerick  
With a rhythm that rings?  
Maybe you would really rather  
Write a ripping rollicking riddle?  
Or classical rhymes  
Like the "Hey Diddle Diddle"?  
All very good, all very well  
But what about prose?  
That's an excellent field  
That gets up and goes  
On and on and on until  
You find something wonderful  
Like frogs in blue bonnets  
Or pirates so plunderful!  
Why not try your hand at wit?  
Just make sure your jokes are funny!  
For nothing's so rotten as punch line forgotten.  
And really won't bring home the money.  
Hey! How 'bout this?  
A song! A ballad!  
Of heroes gone by like Honest Abe Lincoln  
Or good old Gil-Galad!  
But look – there's more!  
Non-fiction is educational!  
Of wrestlers and pianos  
And anvils sensational!  
Did I mention nature?  
A marvelous course!  
There's frogs in blue bonnets  
Bird, dog, and horse.  
You can choose any way that you like  
Just be sure that it's sensible.  
(Or not) and appealing,  
And also (or not) comprehensible.  
Now that I've shown you just what you are  
(A pen, in case, like me, you forgot)  
Look at that paper you've got in your grip  
And give it all that you've got!

Sophia White

## Milliner's Boy

Day by day he sat – a lone boy –  
Lost - in the smooth face of the shop window –  
Where his father made our hats.  
He spoke little – that boy – and played less  
He was – they say – a loner  
A friend of birds – and cats –  
I often passed the boys – at play  
In the streets with their bats and balls  
And in their shouting – my pulse beat fast  
Their exuberance permeating my soul –  
A drummer's beat, a marching song  
That race to win - to not be last  
I'd want to be Best too – the Top  
I wanted to Win – Beat – Face  
To jump in the river - swim the other way  
And then I would pass the boy – quiet  
Sitting with his heels together – his eyes downcast  
His face – not quite as gay  
His thoughts elsewhere – I knew not where  
Deeper – stronger – brighter perhaps  
He did not need to speak –  
I heard his message clear among the noise  
The mongers – the wives – the dogs  
My spirit stilled – Ambition turned weak  
In the face of one so mild – so meek  
And I would go on – down the street  
Home.

Sophia White

## **Minimalism**

The more you leave in the cupboard,  
The more you will have tomorrow.  
'Cause once you're out, you're done,  
You can't buy or beg or borrow.

Leave it there.

Leave it where  
It can't run out.

Sophia White

## Mood

It comes so suddenly  
Without warning  
A subtle pounce and I am caught  
Held faster than a finger in a ring.  
But it only stays a short while –  
Three hours, I find, the max.  
No matter how I ask  
It will not come at my beg or plead,  
Nor in my direst and deepest need.  
No.  
It indeed does not, that mood.  
When taken, I have little will left  
Instead, am driven, by Muse or God  
I cannot say.  
But write, write, WRITE, I must.  
It is as expected, as necessary, as breathing.  
Words flow as though I were not a human,  
But a tongue, used by an unseen Mind.  
The muted colors of the earth fall away,  
Replaced by vivid and wild hues  
Hues such as should not be allowed to exist.  
Their forms are so enticing, so intoxicating,  
One hungers for them once they're long departed.  
Those colors, which addict the soul.  
The smallest leaf is suddenly a universe  
And my eyes can trace each invisible vein,  
Whereas, in Normality, the very cosmos  
Is naught to me but a transparent leaf.  
That mood!  
If only I could catch it and keep it.  
If only I could drink it in a bottle.  
But the danger of it is so very, very deep.  
Too much nectar kills the bee.  
Too much Mood kills poor me.

Sophia White

## Mother

Amidst the roses and the lilies, a lily herself,  
She stands.  
And about her, the petaled ladies-in-waiting,  
Whom she has sown and nurtured, only using  
Her hands.

The petals follow her as a train, she wears a gown  
Of white  
Sewn by the spider-weavers, under the moon  
And she steps to a wild highland tune  
By night.

So fair stands this mortal Venus, amid her trellises  
And stones.  
The blossoms bow to her passing, the grass trembles  
Beneath her tread. At her voice, the mountains rumble  
Their bones.

Gentle, like a dove, and carrying the command of kings.  
She sings.  
Her eyes sing the song of the whippoorwill, and she smiles,  
Unperturbed by the serpent's wooing winks and guiles  
Fair thing.

An Eve, a Psyche, as fair within as without,  
And kind.  
She walks in beauty, the untrodden ways, lovely is she.  
If any mortal should miss her beauty, he must be  
Sheer blind.

And when shall her glory fade? Ne'er, I tell thee true  
For see:  
'So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this, and this gives life  
To thee.'

Sophia White

## **Mother's Day Bouquet**

Some get roses.  
Some get daisies.  
Some get lovely, scented lilies.  
But this Sunday, some will get  
A bouquet of tears.

Sophia White

## **Mother's Day Bouquet II**

Alyssum, for her beauty  
Which shines within her eyes  
Jasmine for her elegance,  
In modesty disguised.  
Laurel for her glory  
So subtle, yet so sweet,  
Holly for her foresight,  
Spoken soft, discreet.  
Violet for her happiness,  
Which beams `neath any sky,  
Rose for all the boundless love  
She gives without a sigh.

Sophia White

## **Musinamor**

Musinamor Beach is white in the sun  
And along the hot shore the waters run  
Under bare feet the sands burn  
My walk along Musinamor is not yet done.

I have walked for a long and tortured time  
With my shallow words and my graceless rhyme  
And precious little to do  
I walk in the mocking mood of a mime.

My footsteps fill with searing sand  
The shore is dull and the sea is bland  
All I want is to be done  
For this lifeless stroll on Musinamor to end.

I look back at the sands I've traversed  
That echo with blank and wearied verse  
My only solace and comfort  
As I endure this Time-defying curse.

Ahead the sands stretch almost endlessly  
So long I must wander so hopelessly  
But the end is in sight  
However set on the horizon so distantly.

Alone I walk with no comforting friend  
And must forge ahead for myself to fend  
But the sun is falling slow  
And this walk along Musinamor shall end.

Sophia White

## **My Myles Has Gone Away**

My Myles has gone away, away.  
My Myles has gone away  
And left me cold and desolate  
On this bare and clammy quay.

His ship is sailing far, so far.  
His ship is sailing far  
And shan't return for many months.  
For Myles has gone to war.

Here I stand alone, alone.  
Here I stand alone.  
And wave to the barren sea  
My heart as cold as stone.

Before me stretch the years, long years.  
Before me stretch the years.  
Rain spatters the gray old quay  
And mingles with my tears.

When shall my Myles return, return?  
When shall my Myles return?  
Am I doomed to wait forever?  
How long must my heart yearn?

Dear Myles, don't delay, delay!  
Dear Myles, don't delay!  
Come home to me, my roving love,  
To this bare and clammy quay.

Sophia White

## **My Myles Has Returned**

My Myles has returned, returned.  
My Myles has returned.  
His ship is sliding up to the dock.  
So long my heart has yearned!

He on the ship appears, appears.  
He on the ship appears.  
I stand with arms spread loving wide  
My face damp with joyful tears.

My Myles comes to me, to me.  
My Myles comes to me.  
His skin is tanned and weatherworn  
With the sun and salt of the sea.

I press him to my heart, my heart.  
I press him to my heart,  
And vow that never in a thousand years  
Will we ever once more part.

But oh! My Myles is sad, so sad.  
Oh, my Myles is sad.  
The tolls of war are on his face,  
They've scarred my lovely lad.

My Myles had been to war, to war,  
My Myles has been to war.  
And now I see the man I loved  
And cherished is no more.

His sword is stained with blood, red blood,  
His sword is stained with blood,  
His face is dark with horrid death –  
The face that was so good!

My Myles is not the same, the same.  
My Myles is not the same.  
I cry with tears bittersweet  
And whisper my Myles' name.

Sophia White

## **My Pa and Your Pa**

(A Song, Composed at Age 8)

My pa and your pa are going on a little jaunt  
My pa and your pa are going on a raccoon hunt.  
My pa and your pa won't be back until late  
S'come on, honey, why don't we make it a date?  
My pa and your pa will head on down to the brake  
You and me can head on down to the lake.  
Come on, sugar, your pa won't be back soon,  
You and me can talk a while by the light of the moon.  
Promise you, sweetheart, we'll back around one,  
Don't be shy, guarantee it'll be lots of fun!

Sophia White

## **My Secret Greatness**

Sometimes there is a move upon my soul  
That makes me close my eyes on all the world  
And think instead of all life as a whole  
A spinning wheel immersed in love and doubt  
A chessboard on which I am but a pawn.  
I conjure up philosophies so deep  
That all the Greek thinkers of days bygone  
Awaken from their thousand years of sleep  
And tug their beards and whistle in their awe.  
What great things they'll say of me when I'm dead!  
And I rush to my desk and start to scrawl  
Those great big thoughts that thunder 'round my head.  
    But after I've stared at them awhile,  
    I rip them up, wink to the mirror, and smile.

Sophia White

## **My Unseen Storyteller**

Who are you, you who steal into my sleep?  
You who grab rest and cast it aside  
Who forbid me that fabled unconscious deep?

Every night you come, whoever you may be,  
And weave into my mind masterpieces!  
You leave wondrous tales and dazzling plots for me.

When morning comes with the harsh, blare sun,  
How I wish to stay in the world you leave.  
Worlds so formed can surely not be human.

I know it is not my own mortal mind that weaves,  
But you, the Unseen Storyteller,  
Who tells tale after tale, anchors them there, and then leaves.

And when I wake with the sun, I wonder:  
Such a tale! But who the teller?  
I am lost for that. But, whoever you are, thank you sir!

I dream not as others dream.  
How anxious am I to return to slumber  
And again delve into the worlds you bring.

Sophia White

## **Mystique of the Chimes**

The chimes upon the arbor  
Are set to ring!  
Harken, all ye peoples -  
Hear them sing:

Harbingers of storms  
Of wanton weather  
Of rebel winds burst free  
From nature's tether.

Wreathed in tinkling charms  
Like the beads which  
Entangle 'round the neck  
Of a jungle witch.

Tinkling in no rhythm  
In no rhyme  
Keeping track of neither  
Tune nor time.

A sound that turns your head  
And makes you think  
You saw a fairie flicker  
Or flower wink.

A sensation wraps  
Around you eerily  
As though you were watched  
By eyes you cannot see.

The chimes are softly clinking  
Such eerie striking song  
Like gnomie voices speaking  
Or a clatt'ring fairie throng.

Sophia White

## **Necromancer**

Fierce and full of fire comes my poem now to me  
Arisen from a pit where breeds all foul and fitful thing,  
Enwreathed in smoke and bitter steam from some unearthly tarn  
Which boils in the bowels of the earth, where imps are born.  
Is not this thing an imp itself, a demon from the deep?  
A hellion wailing with black lungs that never still in sleep?  
At my feet, about my head, it coils serpentine  
Searching me for vagrant wisps of Soul to grimly glean.  
It ever hungers, ever thirsts, and watches vigilant  
For a moment when my mind should fail be diligent.  
Then would it swoop, harpy-like, into my naked soul  
And doom my essence eternally into hell's fiery hole.  
A poet's necromancy work is ill begotten strife  
Which sets him like a spinning top upon a narrow knife.  
He plays with fires that no man should ever dare to tame  
And thinks his play is but some superficial game.  
Oh, beware, for poetry is no superficial thing,  
But illuminates its summoner's own internal fiend  
And laughs when at last the fool, realizing then his plight,  
Finds himself trapped in a ring of hell's most hellish light.

Sophia White

## Never Cliché

This poem is for you  
Whoever you may be  
Reader young or reader old  
Heart of iron, heart of gold.

It's been said so many times  
I guess I'm too cliché  
But everyone could hear it more  
In any different way.

It's been said on radio  
And said in magazine  
It's been said in many books  
And said on your TV.

You've most likely heard it once  
Or twice or even more  
But then again, maybe you've  
Never heard before.

And so, whoever you may be,  
Wherever you may go,  
I promise you by all that's good,  
Jesus loves you so.

Sophia White

## **Night Before Christmas in My House**

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house  
The people were groaning and lying about.  
They were sick like the dickens and green in the face  
I was the only well one in the place.  
So the lot fell to me to clean and to cook  
And neglect my dear duty of writing my book.  
What sort of a holiday is this holiday now  
When people are puking like I-don't-know-how?  
Would that I were a fine lady in France  
And not have to smell it - fat chance.

Sophia White

## **No Worry Hangs Above the Head so Drear**

No worry hangs above the head so drear  
As a day wasted meaningless  
Sitting, as a dark mass oppressing  
Invisibly upon the sagging shoulders.  
The emptier it was, the heavier  
To grow and never cease in its increasing.  
No easy cure, no wonder pill, can mend it,  
But that of work and labor suffered long,  
You can repair the hours lost in nothing,  
But your only complete reparation  
Lies in working harder – longer – faster,  
So better to not waste from the start.

Sophia White

## Not Quite a Dream

My eyes slide slowly off the screen of the computer  
To stare blankly at its reflection on the surface of my tea.  
I tap the cup, and the reflection ripples. Looking up again,  
I see my computer rippling, too, and as translucent as the sea.

I get up in a daze to see my bed and my bookshelf rippling too.  
Wandering then, into a hall that ripples under my feet, I strain  
To stay afloat in this melting world. Outside, the trees and the sky  
Are ripping, undulating as if washed away by an invisible rain.

All around me, the cars and the streets are rippling and fading.  
Other people have caught on; they stand and stare as blank as I.  
We nod slightly in greeting, but turn back again to the world.  
More people appear from a melting bus that trundles by.

My stance upset by a rippling lawn, I grab onto a stranger.  
We hold each other steady as earth and sky shiver and shake.  
It's like God has dipped his finger into the world.  
I grab someone else with my other hand as the earth begins to quake.

Then the sky, the trees, the houses, all begin to fade and die.  
It's turning darker as the light ripples into nothing before our eyes.  
A great mass of people, all holding one another aloft, we stand,  
And realize the ground has gone and above us, so have the skies.

And then, there is nothing at all left to touch or hold onto.  
There is only an unnumerable throng of people hung in space,  
Each gripping another, unaware of who they have grasped,  
Each with the same blank wonder rippling on their face.

Sophia White

## Notes

One note

And a flood of memories stream back in.  
I was young once, and I loved music.  
I read books and was never afraid.  
I went deep into the woods and played  
All alone but never by myself.

Two notes

And I am taken ten years back again.  
I was innocent once, and thought of nothing  
But my little world and my little dreams.  
I put on plays alone for just me to watch.  
I followed little paths far into the trees.

Three notes

And I am lost in shimmering revery.  
I was a tree-climber and a cloud-gazer.  
I stopped to look at every mushroom.  
I talked to squirrels and sang to birds.  
I was alone and free and happy.

No notes

And I am sucked into now once more.  
I am surrounded by people and afraid.  
I watch movies and go to work.  
I climb into the car and gaze at finances.  
I shiver, and wonder how it happened.

Sophia White

## **Nounless**

Wishing that I could:  
But I can't  
Knowing I should not,  
And I shan't

Wondering – if I could  
If I would  
Remembering again  
What I should

Knowing that it's right  
Makes it wrong  
It's short when I want it  
To be long

My words scramble round  
Your dizzy head  
You shan't know their meaning  
Till I'm led

Wondering if it's truly,  
Really so  
Should I not for  
Certain know?

What, in time, will all  
This have brought  
If later on I learn that  
It was not?

Thinking aloud makes  
Nothing clear  
Only dreaming – only  
It is dear

Your words echo through my  
Inner thoughts  
Tracing cruelly all the  
Empty spots

Sophia White

## **Of Someone I Once Knew**

You, the popular, so idolized.  
Adored by many  
Who shouldn't.

I can't help but notice  
When you walk  
You swagger.

You, the lucky, so crafty.  
Thoughts existing  
That shouldn't.

I can't help but wonder  
If there is this -  
What else is there?

You, the sneaking, so slipp'ry.  
Hiding words.  
Hiding thoughts.

Wounds open  
Not aware  
Of their bleeding.

Yet.

Why do you cut  
When you know  
One day those cuts  
Will turn to scars?

Sophia White

## **Of Traitors**

Away ye've turned  
As dogs with tucked tail  
Dastardly cowards  
Ye weep and wail  
No heart have ye  
Who throw stones.

Yellow-stained bones!

Ye left yer homeland  
Ye abandoned mothers  
Yer fathers air weepin'  
Ye've shamed yer brothers  
Craven and spineless  
Not man enou' to fight!

Yer nation's blight!

A curse on ye turncoats!  
Dare ye come home again  
Ye'll meet wi' the noose  
Dare ye call yerself men?  
Abominations all!  
Better ye were dead.

A curse on yer head!

Sophia White

## **Oh! How I Want Adventure!**

Oh! How I want adventure!  
Perhaps I'm being dumb,  
But how I'd love to sail the sea  
An advocate of piracy  
And drink that famous rum.

Oh! How I want some intrigue!  
Maybe I'm just wrong,  
But how I'd love to solve a case  
And bring the world face-to-face  
With conspiracy miles long!

Oh! How I want some action!  
Perhaps you think me rude,  
But how I'd love to stage escapes  
From every prison, pit, and cage  
Just to see if I could.

Oh! How I want some magic!  
Maybe I'm just a fool  
But how I'd love to breathe a flame,  
A unicorn, a huge chess game,  
An enchanted pool.

Oh! How I want adventure!  
Perhaps I'm just a child,  
But how I'd love to fight a foe,  
To save a world, to get up and go!  
To be free and fair and wild!

Sophia White

## Old Oak Tree

Bending, leaning, bearing up so many years,  
Looking to fall – but stronger than stone!  
By the stony brook, he stands alone.

His age is like that of the mountains of stone.  
His hands are like talons with thousands of crooks,  
Stooping under years over the sluggish brook.

In the dark before dawn, his head bows.  
Low and defeated, 't would first appear.  
But nay, 'tis a maestro who hunches here!

And then –

A ray, a single beam, from the black horizon,  
And his perpetual hand is lifted dramatically,  
His thousand fingers crooked emphatically!

Up, up, the hands of the knotted one beckon!  
And from the horizon, a chorus arises,  
Violins break into prelude reprises.

The hands wring every breath from the sky,  
Bringing forth light of scarlet and white  
To drive back the darkness, to combat the night!

The cellos break loose with the trumpets behind  
As the hands wrench the sounds and summon the light,  
A feast for the ears and a fortune for sight!

The music resounds, but still is not done.  
The gods are awakened and even great Zeus  
Strums a great lyre to shake the world loose!

The hands! They strain in their final command,  
They stretch and bow amid clanging carillon  
And with the power of ages they summon the dawn!

Sophia White

## **Old, Blind, Glorious**

His face is a tangle of wrinkles,  
But if you follow the crisscrossed lines  
You will soon discover a pattern  
Like winding roads on a weathered map  
That start nowhere and end nowhere  
And pass through many strange and exotic places.

His eyes are pale blue with age  
And stare at the world through a peaceful film.  
You see them and think of the jeweler's shop  
Where there is a glass case  
In which two blue daimonds rest,  
Isolated from the world, yet so beautiful.

He smiles when he notes you staring,  
And you nearly pretend you weren't looking,  
But his smile is so deep  
And crinkles the skin around his eyes,  
You cannot help but stare a little longer,  
Not realizing that you have begun to smile, too.

Sophia White

## **On The Use of Narcotics for Inspiration**

All the wishfuls desperately cry:  
"Muse! Muse! O Muse! "  
But where is the muse  
To enthuse  
Them?

All the hopefuls wretchedly cry:  
"Shakspere! Shakspere! "  
But no Bard here  
To Hear  
Them.

All the amateurs wrenchingly cry:  
"Gods! Gods! Gods that be! "  
But no gods see  
(If they be)  
Them.

All the aspirants wistfully cry:  
"Anything – from anyone! "  
And behold: things come.  
But when done,  
They die.

(no. I do not use drugs.)

Sophia White

## **Once the Cover's Shut**

The last page is turned over, and there is silence,  
As you sit still, blinking in a sorrowful confusion.

Dull and senseless; tottering drowsily  
Your body functions slowly and mechanically.

You look around the world, the common reality,  
Like you would look at a picture book.

It is stark and flat, and the colors are all wrong,  
And the words don't match the pictures.

There is a longing at the bottom of your stomach,  
To go back, to that place you spent hours in.

Your mind tells you that that was really the reality,  
That this pale world is a dream that will pass.

But you know, with a pang of sadness,  
That once the cover's shut, it is over.

And no matter how you loved that world,  
It is evaporated and dissolved into THE END.

Sophia White

## **Once They Are Written**

There were thoughts everywhere,  
Scrawled on paper napkins  
On the backs of old papers  
In the corners of books.  
Those thoughts were mine once  
And still are, though I recant.  
How shall I purge myself?  
What is written remains so,  
And though I burn them all  
Into ashes that fly on the wind,  
They are still written, and once written  
Is to be written forever.  
The thoughts, once written, now burned,  
Are still thoughts that were inked,  
And once inked on paper  
Forever inked in memory.  
I cannot change; I cannot change.  
I recant the thoughts I once had,  
But once they are writ, they are stone.

Sophia White

## **One Star**

The sky is blacker than a bottle of ink  
Spilled across a panther's pelt  
In the deepest, darkest cave.

There is no sound but Silence.  
No music plays but Quiet  
The very air has fallen still.

No beast moves, no bird takes wing.  
No man breathes, no child sings.  
Nothing is – but black.

But suddenly my eye can see  
A single, solitary life afloat on the black.  
One star.

Sophia White

## **Only Joy**

Here they are, I've brought them.  
I've tied them up and bound them.  
My heart breaks within me  
But I consider it only joy.

Here my dreams, they are finished.  
Mine no more – they are Yours.  
Though they weep at my abandon,  
I consider it only joy.

Here the hopes I had created,  
Pictures I painted in the past.  
It feels like my soul is ripping,  
But I consider it only joy.

Here I lay my ambitions,  
Yesterday I treasured them dear.  
And though I still love, cherish them,  
I consider it only joy.

Here I stand raw and unfettered,  
My dreams of the world left behind.  
You are my new dream and treasure,  
And I consider it only joy.

Sophia White

### **Only Three**

She looks at me  
So young, only three,  
Her eyes are blue and scared.  
"Sissy, " says she,  
"Don't leave me."  
In a voice no more than a whisper.  
I lean down, smile, and kiss her.  
I pat her curls  
(Sweet little girl!)  
"Baby, " says I,  
"I tell you no lie,  
I'll be here as long as I can,  
My love, and I'll hold your hand."  
She smiles at me  
"Sissy, " says she,  
"I love you."  
"Love you too."

Sophia White

## **Orion**

There stood Orion.  
And I, earthbound,  
Left alone to merely  
Gaze.

How could a child  
Love a star?  
Oh, how I loved  
Him.

But now, I smile  
As at an old friend  
To my starlit  
Love.

For I dream of far-off  
Stars no more.  
I have found Orion on  
Earth.

Sophia White

## **Out the Window**

The people are so brightly clad  
And sashes and scarves and jewelry fly  
The air is filled with song and laughter  
To which all the people set to dancing.

I watch from a window with pleasure  
One eye shut, to see it all the best.  
Deep within my stomach, there's a hole  
But I ignore the knots and disquiet.

After all, the streamers join the buildings  
In a great mass of color, joy, and light,  
And the music rattles the clouds above  
With the cymbals and the bells and the beat.

I watch one little girl tossing flowers  
In a wild and carefree sort of way  
Her little feet are dancing down the street  
With no worries and no sorrows so haunt her.

I watch, and my heart fills with longing,  
And I want to look for all eternity.  
But soon, my arms grow sore and weak,  
And I am forced to lower the kaleidoscope.

Sophia White

## **Paper Airplane**

I've made a paper airplane  
With wings of Crayola blue  
I made it just for me  
To fly away with you.

To fly away from this old world  
With all its storms of tears  
I made it out of cardstock  
So it should last for years.

Goodbye, all you people  
Who fill the world with hate.  
I'm flying off to happier lands  
Before it gets too late

'Cause then I'll be a goner  
Drowning in your lies  
So now I think I'll fly away  
And explore the foreign skies.

Sophia White

## **Penny Gathering**

I am not one to gather pennies.

You may think me foolish  
You may indeed be right  
My belt isn't buckled tight  
Nor do I think spending ghoulish  
But hoarding's not alright.

What comes to me goes out  
To the cashiers and the banks  
Who accept with little thanks  
But the goods are what it's all about  
Not money-stuffed fish tanks.

A book has much more value  
Than a slip of papery green  
And a wallet that is lean  
Is what I'druther pursue  
And a bank account that's mean.

I am not one to gather pennies.

Sophia White

## **Perambulations**

Groaning shambles  
On my rambles  
Passing ghosts  
Of long lost gambles.

Sighing breezes  
Worn with wheezes  
Rip my hair  
With weakened seizures.

Crumbling cities  
Drowned in pity  
Speckling maps  
All gray and gritty.

Haunted places  
Empty faces  
All my walks  
Through barren spaces.

Sophia White

## **Pervading Grays**

The sky, seen through a window,  
Is a dead and tasteless hue.  
No sight of sun or rainbow,  
The gray's devoured blue.  
Not even rain breaks the scene  
And adds a blest respite.  
All is base, uncouth, and mean  
No beauty is in sight.  
No, no break from dreariness  
All is gloom and stale.  
Enveloped in this weariness,  
I myself am pale.  
And my own face turns gray  
In the shadowless spare light.  
I fear that this melancholy day  
Will never succumb to night.  
Oh! To see the stars again  
In an ink-stained sky,  
And hear once more the moonlight spin  
Its silver lullaby.  
To feel the nightly breezes  
Caress my careworn face  
But until this gray-light ceases  
The world's a sullen place.

Sophia White

## Photograph

There we are. Two shadows in a photograph  
Faces blurred by time. The outlines are hazy, unfocused  
I'm not even sure it's us anymore.

Where did the days go? How came these nights?  
From where I don't know, but it'll be alright.

The night shall not endure, it never has,  
But still this candle in my heart flickers.  
Fear invades, what if you are lost again?  
Beauty fades, years cover dreams and then  
Here I am, staring at a photograph  
Wondering.

I hear us, the voices of an unclear past,  
Ghost whispers through a looking glass  
Staring at me, I see pictures of you,  
Reflected in my shining eyes.

But then the light of years, of time,  
Ten thousand days of light blend and bind.  
Where did you go? Where did you go?  
I know that you were there, but I've been wrong before.

I heard your whisper. Was it the wind?  
I don't understand but I'll try till I do or die.  
I stare at our photograph  
Wondering.

These walls are crumbling, and behind them, the sky  
Peers through slanted sunlight and dust on the fly  
I stare right back at it, but bold no more,  
For it can see you now. I can't anymore.

Back into the photograph I turn my thoughts  
Wondering what was real, what was not  
Back into the lost years, my fevered gaze  
Weakly roves and returns in a daze.

Returns into the photograph,  
Here I stand with a photograph,  
My hand clinging to a photograph  
My eyes weep o'er that photograph  
Wondering.

Sophia White

## Poemhunter

The Poem Hunter came and sat next to me.  
I asked, "Do you help us find a poem  
Or a poet? Hence your name?"  
"At times," he smiled. "But my purpose  
Is not to be a guide for the unguidable.  
There are guides aplenty already.  
No.

I am the Poem Hunter. I find Poems  
(And poets) and bring them  
Into the Light they did now know  
That they were seeking."  
And he, upon my puzzled frown, went on:  
"There are poets in the far reaches  
Of this wordless world  
Who have words to give the wordless  
But they know it not – yet.  
I am here to seek them out  
To hold their hand as they step out.  
To show them how to make it in.  
To hand them the map to win.  
To point them in the right direction.  
I am the Poem Hunter."  
And I saw. And I said,  
"As you found me. A poet  
Languishing in bed.  
Not knowing there are people  
Who need words not their own.  
And you sought me out.  
You made my dream my own.  
Though it may seem small at first  
It will grow, it will grow."  
And I bowed to the Poem Hunter.  
And kept on writing.

Sophia White

## Poetry

To speak in paragraphs is fine,  
I suppose some find it best.  
But to conjure measured rhyme  
That throbs with hearts and paces time,  
Is indeed the cleverest.

Anyone can say a word  
Or string them up like beans,  
But how sweet is language heard  
When by passion's whip is spurred,  
Not for an end – for means.

Prose suits those who stay inside  
And speak in monotone.  
Poetry's for those who glide  
Into the sun with eager stride  
And see the world as all their own.

Sophia White

## **Porcupine**

Oddest of animals  
Soft underneath and yet  
Sharp up on top of you  
Shunned by the carnivores  
Saved by your rigid barbs  
Bumbling along through the  
Cowering wood. Porcupine.

Sophia White

## **Pride**

Ribbons, ribbons  
Bits of thread  
Woven brightly  
Blue and red.  
First and second  
Paper thin  
No substance  
To my ribbons.

Sophia White

## **Prism**

I think there is a prism in my life.  
A foul and putrid bit of glass,  
That, whene'er I do good,  
It dices it up into colored truth.  
My own hopeful beam of white  
Is turned, by this hated prism,  
Instead to what I never meant it to be.

Sophia White

## Promise Kept

Trapped in a dark and clammy hole,  
Pain lanced through heart and soul,  
No rest, no peace, no comfort found  
In walls or ceiling, air or ground.

I gnashed my teeth and ripped my hair,  
Called for you, but you weren't there.  
I screamed and cursed, clawed my face,  
But you had vanished without a trace.

"You promised! " I cried, and wept and wailed.  
I'd called for help – but you had failed.  
In times of joy you'd walked so near,  
But when pain struck you disappeared.

I ranted, I stormed, I clenched my fists,  
I threatened, I lectured, and I hissed.  
Then – weary and broken – I collapsed in tears,  
Then – "Are you finished? " you whispered in my ear.

And I surrendered without a word.  
Too loud I'd screamed, so never heard  
Your calm assurance, your soft promise  
You're still there when all's amiss.

Then I lifted my eyes and saw your hand  
Open a door to a sunlight land  
And heard, "Enter, child, a promise kept."  
And I went in, and there I slept.

Sophia White

## Psalm

Man, a travesty of his beginning,  
A finite beast that crawls the earth,  
Moaning in his exile,  
Far from his intended hearth,  
So wretched in his mourning,  
So wicked in his way,  
How could he be the Beloved  
Of the Ancient of Days?  
God, in all his glory,  
The Holy King of Light,  
In Heaven's magnificent halls,  
From whom flees the night,  
Calls out so soft and tender,  
His voice resounds as thunder,  
And summons to groveling Man  
With a love that surpasses all.  
Man, with eternal scowling,  
Hears not His gentle voice  
And runs away foolheaded,  
Thinking in his stubborn way  
That God is not, and that Man is.  
The great I AM is watching,  
His tears mix with His wrath,  
Wrath so just and deserved  
Of Man on his wicked path.  
God, in all His mercy,  
Who loves incomprehensibly,  
Lets Man run his own way  
That in the end, the few who chose,  
The few who believe the Son,  
Might love and truly love  
But those who don't, lose.  
Lose their lives, their souls  
To their own darkling ways.  
How great and fair is He!  
The Almighty Ancient of Days!

Sophia White

## **Raining Light**

Looking up and seeing clouds  
In looming mottled angry crowds  
Watching shadows run the ground  
And howling winds race all around  
Thunder snaps as lightning threads  
In streaks of snarling whitish reds  
Sky meets earth in vicious war  
And all the vile demons roar!

But!

Down falls rain of burning light  
Down streak drops of golden white  
Cool as winter on my face  
Falling out of empty space  
Splashing on my reaching hands  
Dropping down as pearlen strands  
Amid the broiling dark of night  
I am cooled by raining light.

Sophia White

## **Read Me**

You may look into my eyes  
And see the sword-thrusts of sorrow.  
You may look into my eyes  
And tell me what I'll be tomorrow.

You may look into my eyes  
And see them return your shining.  
You may look into my eyes  
And smile at their youthful pining.

You may look into my eyes  
And read my unwritten poetry.  
You may look into my eyes  
Only – tell me what you see.

Sophia White

## **Refusal**

poking, prying  
all day long  
sticking noses  
where noses don't  
belong

sneaking, slying  
like a snake  
fragile hearts  
are easy hearts to  
break

frowning, faulting  
all my travels  
shaking head  
as if heads were  
gavels

sniffing, snubbing  
as if the mangle  
were on the loose  
still I won't choose  
to change

Sophia White

## **Return from a Search**

Stumbling  
Wearily onto the veranda  
White hat in hand,  
And falling into the wicker chair,  
Where lemonade is waiting,  
But it has grown warm in the sun.

Weeping  
The Mutarazi streaming from inside me  
And my hands so empty,  
Brown from the sun and in need  
Of some soap and water,  
But I am unable to walk inside.

Gazing  
With the emptiness of a gray sky  
Across the short grass  
That sits still and ochre in the sun  
Saying nothing to me,  
Though I beg it for answers.

Gasping,  
As my heart flutters within me  
And I reach out with one empty hand  
Stretching for the lemonade  
But my hand falls short  
And I fall instead, heart broken.

Sophia White

## Revelation of the Day

Today I decided I did not need you.  
That I am strongest alone.  
That, contrary to my former convictions,  
You are not necessary to my breathing.  
You are not the anchor holding me in place,  
Or the ballast which holds me down.  
I discovered that I am complete in myself,  
And you are only an remainder to my dividend.  
I am a tree, with roots, trunk, and branches  
While you are just the grass around me  
Or the nest set into my branches.  
I do not need you. Why did I ever think I did?  
You are not, as I once thought, my better half,  
Because I am two halves, a whole, without you.  
You are not the ocean and I the land,  
For I am the earth. You may be the moon.  
We are not two pieces to a puzzle,  
But I am the whole puzzle, and every piece  
Is a piece of me, and you are not a piece at all.  
I am I, myself, am me. I am perfectly One.  
With you, I am still only me, as I am.  
I am the same heart, same soul, same mind.  
You are only an accessory I do not need.  
Today I discovered all of these truths,  
And now, having learned and understood them,  
I may truly love you.

Sophia White

## Rewind

Rewind, rewind, O silent Time  
To days ere long forgot  
So long ago did they turn dry  
Like worn forget-me-nots.

A smile passed in years ago  
Is easily overshadowed  
For a smile cannot stand alone  
When it is sudden widowed.

A day that's swathed in sunny rays  
Is not hard to undress  
And then clothe in thunderheads  
With horrific suddenness.

Rewind, rewind, O silent Time  
To golden years long dead.  
Cast away these rotten blooms,  
Lift the forget-me-not's head.

Sophia White

## **Ria's Pool**

Ria lies beside a pool that catches heaven's stars  
And gazes at the pinpoint lights with dreamy eyes.  
The dark green grass is pointing at the upper skies  
But Ria gazes at the flat face of the pool.

The stars are silent high above, waiting for Ria.  
But she is not looking at them. She only sees  
The stars reflected. The cool night breeze  
Tries to turn her gaze up. She resists.

The stars in the pool are lovely, indeed.  
But the stars in the sky are much more bright.  
But Ria is lost in the pool's false light.  
She cannot see the truth. She is blind.

Sophia White

## **S is for Sad**

I don't want to run around  
This great big wheeling earth  
Like a hamster in a ball  
Rising just to fall  
No sacred home or hearth.

I don't want to run this race  
This speeding, staring track  
Is filled with lies  
And cutting eyes  
Fingers pointed at your back.

I don't want to join this crowd  
This crowd of human sneers  
It's naught but hate  
Appetites to sate  
On unsuspecting peers.

I don't want to run this earth  
Where the darkness grows so deep  
Eyes behind hands  
None understand.  
Just let me go home – and sleep.

Sophia White

## **Safe**

I am sitting in my chair  
Stroking my little gray rabbit  
While the computer hums  
And Celtic flutes pipe softly.

And outside, the world roars  
Leaping up  
And falling down  
Clashing upon itself  
With ravenous teeth and ripping claws.

Sophia White

## Sam

Sam's my porcupine  
(Katharine gave him to me  
For Valentine's, you see.)  
He's every bit mine.  
He sits on the foot  
    of my bed.  
"I'll watch for monsters, "  
    he said.

Sam's my porcupine  
(He's not very prickly;  
Actually, quite tickly.)  
So glad he's mine.  
I named him for Samwise  
    Gamgee.

A good and true friend  
    Sam Gamgee.

Sam's my porcupine.  
(He's got a ribbon red  
And sits on my bed.)  
Sam's every bit mine.

Sophia White

## **Sea of Time**

The water washes over me  
The waves of passing years  
A sea that fell from heaven high  
A lake of angel tears.  
I cannot grasp the surging surf  
That knocks me down again  
No matter how I try to stand  
My will is pale and thin.  
The heavy years grow larger yet  
The waves weigh more and more  
They crash against my struggling heart  
Each larger than before.  
This Sea of Time is evermore  
Its depths shall never end  
We who live among the waves  
Are forced our time to spend.

Sophia White

## Secret Vices

We all of us hide within our souls  
Little secrets much too dark to tell.  
Be they cruel or hard or full of fear,  
Never on the surface they appear,  
Our own private, secret little Hells.

We know, in our uttermost of thoughts,  
With dread horror that leaves our thinking scarred,  
That while others may think us, ah, so nice,  
In their ignorance know not the Secret Vice  
That identifies us black and grimly charred.

Every soul is hiding some dark secret.  
No man not thus is no man at all.  
A dark and clenching truth it is indeed  
The lives we are so helpless here to lead.  
Helpless to depravity, we fall.

Ah, what now, my race so foully dark?  
To what end will each of us soon come?  
How long can things kept hidden hide away  
Before they're exposed by glaring day?  
To what end will each of us soon come?

Sophia White

## Sharp Rocks

She paced the road, a lonely form.  
Beneath her feet the hard cement  
Drew from her the warmth and heat  
And she knew what coldness meant.  
She paced the crack that drew the line  
'Twixt Home and World, 'twixt Heart and Stone.  
Discovered there a truth severe  
That chilled her blood and froze her bone.  
No difference lay in that small space  
That once had kept the evil out.  
No distinction could she find  
But diablerie all about.

She felt as though she were a ship,  
Far from any cove or ark,  
Floating on a sea so calm,  
While the skies above grew dark.  
A hurricane began to brew  
And she could see no land in sight,  
But an island small and firm,  
Its lighthouse beacon blaring bright.  
But no hope did it advance  
The little ship out on the sea.  
Its light sent out an envoi grim,  
A cold and wicked emissary:

"Sharp rocks!  
Stay Away! Away!  
No harbor here, no port!  
Sharp rocks! "

So she paced with bleak dismay  
Beneath the starless, moonless sky.  
Alone and lost, no hope to hold,  
No one to hear her desperate sigh.  
A hopeless thing, afraid and lost,  
A lamb trapped in the lion's den.  
She felt within her heart of hearts  
She'd never see the sun again.  
It's yellow rays were lost for good  
No more would Earth be gently bathed  
By Sol's caress and golden kiss  
No more would the lost be saved.

Her soul turned dark, about to die,  
As one last time she raised her eyes –  
There on the horizon's stripe  
So soft! The sun began to rise.

Sophia White

## **Shatter**

The still silence falls  
A curtain, nay, a wall  
To dampen all the noise  
Of the gathered girls and boys  
Not a thing is heard  
Not a whisper, not a word  
But a solemn symphony  
Of silent harmony  
Like a soundless breeze  
Gliding in with ease  
Falls the silent wall  
Holding all in thrall...

Then laughter!  
With a clatter!  
Like a clang  
Out it rang  
From their lips  
Laughter rips  
Hoots and hollers  
Wild callers  
Façade falls  
Broken wall  
With the laughter  
Silence shatters.

Sophia White

## **She Saw a Man on Television**

She saw a man on television  
In a suit and tie  
And he wore a fine felt hat  
Cocked over his eye.  
She saw him sing and whistle  
And dance a little step  
And she wished the men today  
Would not be so unkempt.  
She saw a man on television  
Woo a pretty lass  
With smiles, winks, and daffodils,  
And diamonds made of glass.  
She saw him tip his hat to her  
And offer her his arm  
And lead her to the dance floor  
With gentlemanly charm.  
She saw a man on television  
Smile with easy grace  
And wished that she could find a man  
With such an honest face.  
But she knew that man on television  
Was a dying breed  
And suits and ties and tall felt hats  
Had all grown obsolete.

Sophia White

## **Sieze the Day**

There are those who merely exist.  
Who srabble about the Tree of Life,  
Gathering nuts and stray leaves  
Building nests of dead, dry twigs.  
There are those who hide in the leaves  
From the sun, the stars, the sky.  
Wanting only to be left alone  
Waiting as long as they can to die.  
There are those who run up and down  
Never looking up or around  
Wanting no more than to get through  
To get through life and be done with it.  
There are those who cannot take it.  
Who see the leaves as dull and pale,  
The boughs too hard or too narrow.  
These few brave cowards leave living  
And instead jump off the tree.

Then there are those who 'sieze the day'  
Who climb as high as the tree will take them.  
There they view the awesome wonders  
Spread in the sky so high above.  
They journey to every branch and leaf,  
Fearing nothing, bowing to no one,  
And who, by their own teeth and claws,  
Carve their names into the Tree.

Tell me, which will YOU be?

Sophia White

## **Slay Without a Qualm**

It was a fool thing to do;  
Even more so when you told it,  
And spoke so flippant too  
As if it were no thing to hold it.  
Perhaps you thought you clever;  
Perhaps you didn't think.  
This latter seems to lever  
The issue in a wink.  
Such a matter's weighty;  
At least for one as me.  
My options aren't lately  
What they used to simply be.  
I could really gnaw it  
And tremble with my hate;  
Or act to've softly bought it  
Like the food set on one's plate.  
I may well soon forget it,  
And you will never know;  
Just as like you will regret it  
And suffer 'neath my row.  
I can always leave you,  
Walk away without a care  
(Never finding what I'd hoped to)  
As if you were never there.  
I sit and ponder darkly,  
Your fate well in my palm:  
Forget and go on starkly  
Or slay without a qualm?

Sophia White

## **Small Men**

Small men in stuffed shirts  
Toddering about with pipes  
Dropping their wallets, bending  
And retrieving them off the ground.

Small men that bend as easily  
As rods of stone, and break too.  
Small men that walk in grooves  
And cannot reach to step out.

Small men who follow a track  
Follow it till it ends or they.  
Reaching for nothing at all  
But the next small, rigid step.

Small men who have no will  
Who run by clockwork ticks  
Who can tell you the time of day  
Offhand, but not the weather.

Small men who see the world  
As being as small as they.  
Oh! The men are so very small!  
God save me from small men!

Sophia White

## **Smallest Season**

The trees are just beginning  
To set out their new leaves.  
They burst forth oh, so gently,  
In pale and soft green sheaves.

All across the treetops  
The infant leaves are sprayed,  
Like foam lightly tossed upon  
A gentle ocean wave.

The birds begin to settle  
Into their new-built nests.  
It is this mellow time of year  
That I love the best.

It isn't quite the Spring's,  
Nor is it Winter's claim -  
This sweet and tranquil season  
That has no widespread fame.

Many people pass it by  
And never know it's there,  
For it only lasts the shortest while,  
As fleeting as the air.

Sophia White

## **So Long**

So long, and yet my hands recall the dance.  
My mind has long since lost its touch,  
But my fingers, my fingers lightly prance,  
Sighing with relief to dance again.

So long, and my mind is sore with rust.  
It strains to follow, quickly fails,  
Still slow and tired 'neath the dust,  
But my hands – they just fly.

So long, and the music still can play.  
My memory is weak, my mind in shock.  
But my fingers have waited for the day  
To take over the mind and play again.

So long, and if I think, all is lost.  
I must quiet thought for now  
As my hands thaw the years' frost.  
I still my mind lest all be lost again.

Sophia White

## **So Strange a Dream**

There he sits in his ruins, Man.  
He holds the ashes of his thought in his palms  
Wondering.  
In the ash, there is nothing distinguishable  
For it is all hopeless gray. Nothing remains.

His thoughts, his dreams, his purpose  
Are all vanished – even the ash turns to mist  
Disappearing.  
Before his eyes his own hands turn pale  
Begin to crumble, and so his face, his thigh.

His dark and empty eyes look on blankly,  
Barely comprehending what he has done  
So blindly.  
“This is the way of things, ” he says so soft.  
Everything is ending, nothing will remain.

The cosmos is gone, vanished into emptiness,  
The stars he had stared at with such pride  
Only memory.  
Even memory begins to melt away inside his mind,  
And he is left empty. A hollow shell quickly fading.

Sitting in his nothingness, so soon to die,  
He still searches without hope or reason  
For meaning.  
“All is death.” Yet still he dreams of life,  
So strange a dream within his thick despair.

Sophia White

## **Something About a Forest**

There's just something about a forest  
That makes the turbulent soul fall still  
And listen to the mournful dirge  
Of the solemn whipporwill.

There's just something about a forest  
That makes closed eyes want to look  
At the rippling, tipping kaleidoscope  
Of the steady-flowing brook.

There's just something about a forest  
Than makes the angry gazes see  
The regal and majestic might  
Of the ancient maple tree.

There's just something about a forest  
That makes the most stubborn will learn  
To praise the bashful beauty  
Of the pale green, newborn fern.

There's just something about a forest  
That awakens weary souls  
With the fresh rejuvenation  
That only a forest holds.

Sophia White

## **Song of Roth**

The people's hope is fading.  
They are sick of waiting.  
They say their kings have gone –  
But Roth Zreth knows the truth.

Deyn is leading them astray  
And who will rise up and say  
"No! Hope is still burning!  
The Wintonwi are not dead! "

Roth Zreth, come forward.  
Save Myana by your word!  
Though you are a Gray Jack's son  
You know the Promise of the Kings.

Fearless, dauntless Roth Zreth,  
Fazed not by blood and death,  
Roth Zreth must make a choice:  
To join Tirel? To join Údel?

The Blade Master, the Emerald Fox,  
Quicker than lightning, harder than rocks.  
Roth Zreth, the general's son –  
Choose whom you will serve.

Sophia White

## **Song of Rusviel**

King Ronni lies slain by the Usurper;  
The reign of the Wintonwi done.  
The Queen and the children are murdered –  
All the children but one.

Tirel had faded to ashes  
A remnant of what she was.  
The green has all turned gray  
But still she hopes because:

Rusviel is still alive.  
The wind still carries his name.  
There is work to be done, Rusviel,  
A Usurper to put to shame!

Üdel's hand is very strong,  
But Blood is stronger still  
When it runs in the royal veins  
Of young prince Rusviel!

For thirteen years all Tirel  
Has lain in desecration  
But with the Prince Returning,  
Joy will flood the nation.

Tirel! Tirel! Awake and see!  
Your Prince comes with the dawn!  
Young is he and brave of heart!  
Your vict'ry is half won!

Sophia White

## **Sparring**

A thousand questions all resound  
As hands tick aching slow.  
Unspoken pleadings fill the air:  
What would you have me know?

Shrouds of silk and spider-thread  
Cloak the blazing word.  
Here am I, list'ning close  
But little though is heard.

A fragrant song perhaps exists  
For me, it is too far.  
With foil up and mask pulled low  
With Silence on I spar!

Sophia White

## **Sparring II**

A thousand mists all swirled about  
Obscuring you from view  
But then a strong wind from the south  
Pierced the darkness through

Down I set my foil and  
My mask I cast away  
Out of the opaque questions  
Ran into the Bright of Day.

Sophia White

## Spiderwebs

Wrapped up in my dreams, nothing can go wrong  
Night is moonlit and the days are long  
Thoughts are reality, my world is my own song,  
And butterflies don't get trapped in spiderwebs.  
Indeed, nowhere can I see spiderwebs.

Trouble isn't found in this dictionary  
Smiles in this world are always stationary  
Here I hide, with kittens and canaries.  
Canaries that weave no spiderwebs.  
Indeed, here I am free of spiderwebs.

My mind is a solid fortress, I retreat,  
And the false quiet of it stills my quick heartbeat  
Here I know what's what, and all ends meet.  
The corners here aren't clogged with spiderwebs.  
Indeed, here there can be no spiderwebs.

But...

How long can I maintain this concentration?  
How long before pain obscures elation?  
My train is fast approaching the end station.  
And across my vision comes a spiderweb.  
Indeed, despite all my efforts, a spiderweb.

Sophia White

## Stolen Kiss

Golden leaves flutter down  
Around the girl in the gown  
With laurel in her hair.

Golden sunlight floods the trees  
Bathing the boy on his knees  
Soon to be knighted there.

The girl holds light her sturdy stave  
And taps the boy so very brave  
Upon his suntanned shoulder.

"I pledge thee with my soul true  
To always and more honor you! "  
With a muffled giggle he told her.

She smiled back, composed, serene,  
A true and valiant woodland queen:  
"My knight could not be braver! "

She had no doubt within her mind  
That should she ever trouble find  
He would boldly save her.

Up he took his wooden shield  
Arose from where he had kneeled  
And held out his knightly hand.

The queen inclined her royal chin  
And handed the stick-like sword to him,  
The sharpest in the land.

Her façade nearly – almost broke  
Her giggle more of a queenly choke  
One escaped bubble of bliss.

And the knight, so very swift,  
Stole that moment when she tripped  
And turned it into a kiss.

Sophia White

## **Succor**

Oh, they are so cruel! They are so cruel!  
How can such hate as this exist?  
Oh God, dear God, dear mighty God,  
How can you let it be?

All Hell unleashed in violent storm;  
A tempest breaks, and breaks,  
Upon the shore of my sad heart  
I cannot, cannot, cannot stand.

Fire and ice, fire and ice,  
Either, either, I say, suffice,  
To end the hate, cruel, cruel hate,  
Be there God or gods or Fate:

Send a fire: burn the tears.  
Send a flood: drown the fear.  
Eloi! Eloi! Why don't you come?  
Send a Savior: take me home.

Sophia White

## Sun-bird

I caught a bright sun-bird all full of the sky  
And caged it so that it's light could be mine,  
But the sun-bird, it cried, and it cried, and it cried,  
Until I couldn't take it, and put it outside.

That sun-bird, it flew, and it flew, and it flew,  
It flew like it didn't know what to do.  
It soared to the stars, and the wine-red moon,  
And chirped the most sunny and dandy of tunes.

And I on the ground, so very below,  
Watched my little bright sun-bird go.  
I tried not to cry as it vanished from sight,  
Leaving my heart as dark as the night.

But one day, my sun-bird, it came back to me,  
With the light of the sun held tight in its beak.  
It dropped all that light in a shower 'round me  
And I danced and I danced in a grand jubilee.

Now when I see a sun-bird in the sky  
I don't even give a moan or a sigh  
I don't long for the sun-birds or catch them at all  
'Cause I lost what I had and so gained after all.

Sophia White

## **Superhero**

Have you ever walked outside  
Looked up at the open sky  
And almost lifted up your arms  
To just push off and fly?

Have you ever stared at glasses  
As if your eyes would pop  
Attempting to with just a gaze  
Make them cross the tabletop?

Have you ever closed your eyes  
As hard as they would go  
To see if maybe you could turn  
As see-through as H<sub>2</sub>O?

Sophia White

## **Sweet Muse**

Sweet Muse, my love,  
Draw near to me  
Lend me all thy prowess.

Sweet Muse, so fair,  
Dally not away  
But place thine hand in mine.

Sweet Muse, dear heart,  
Succumb to me  
And lay thy heart with me.

Sweet Muse, go not,  
But linger still  
Grant me all thou knowest.

Sweet Muse, sit down,  
And stay awhile  
Whisper in my ear.

Sweet Muse, my love,  
My essential one,  
Be near, always, be near.

Sophia White

## **Take Me Out to the Broadway**

Take me out to the Broadway  
Take me out to the show  
Buy me some wine and some Italian food  
I don't care if we never go home  
For it's boo hoo hoo in the love scene  
And rah rah rah at the end  
For it's one - two - three acts till then  
At the Broadway show

Sophia White

## **Take Me to Where the Music Comes From**

Take me to where the music comes from  
To its very basest root or central core,  
Where the beginning of every song is living  
The matriarch of every rolling score.

Take me to where the notes are springing  
New and young and never heard before,  
That I might discover what their essence is,  
Take me there, or at least show me the door.

Take me to where the songs are rooted,  
That place where they all become one,  
To that one song or note or chord or something  
From which all existing music has been spun.

Sophia White

## **Tangible**

Tangible:  
To feel  
To touch  
Smell?  
Indeed  
To see  
And know  
Go  
To do  
Think it  
And imagine  
To write  
To sing  
A dance  
A book  
Hold it up  
Watch it fly  
To possess  
To Be  
We humans  
Crave  
Tangible  
Too much.

Sophia White

## **Tears Fill the Earth**

Too tired. Gazing up. Life gone.  
The world is terribly white.  
Very scared. Eyes wide. Heart numb.  
My dreams are nowhere in sight.

How can I go on?  
The road is much too lonely.  
The flowers once were lovely  
But now they're gone  
And tears fill the earth.

Nerves tingling. Ears ringing. Voice dead.  
Tears stream down my face.  
Blankly staring. Not even caring. Like death.  
Such a very frightening place.

Dare I walk another day?  
I hold a pool of tears in my hands  
Watching them drain into the sand  
Running down on their grieving way  
And tears fill the earth.

Sophia White

## **Tearstained Angels**

A man walks down the dusty street  
Worn down and broken, lookin' beat  
He carries a bag stuffed with cash  
He knows it's wrong, but he don't care  
He ain't seen right anyway, anywhere.

And the tearstained angels are watching him  
From heaven's tearstained gates.  
And the tearstained angels weep for him.  
They know where he's going, they know.  
He ain't bound for the pearly gates.

A fireman stands enreathed in smoke.  
The flames lick his face and brush his coat.  
He hears a faint and pleading cry  
From deep within the flaming hallway.  
He pretends he never heard, and walks away.

And the tearstained angels are watching him  
From heaven's tearstained gates.  
And the tearstained angels weep for him.  
They know what he's doing, they know.  
And for the one inside, it's just too late.

A girl walks down the hall at school.  
She has the answers, but she's too "cool"  
To tell the girl cryin' in the stall  
That there's a way out of the strife  
She's been livin' in all her life.

And the tearstained angels are watching her  
From heaven's tearstained gates.  
And the tearstained angels weep for her.  
They know how she is hurting, they know.  
And the only one who can help decides to hate.

The tearstained angels are watching you  
From heaven's tearstained gates.  
And the tearstained angels weep for you.  
They know who you really are, they know.  
But still hope for you, and still they wait...

Sophia White

## Television

One thing that I sincerely hate  
I would like to obliterate  
That black box in the living room  
And in the kitchen, and the bedroom,  
And the car, and the family room,  
And the garage, and the bathroom.  
That pointless tube that does no good  
That fouls the air as nothing should  
That vile, sickly, ghastly cube  
That putrid, stupid, stinking tube  
That television.

Sophia White

## **Tempting**

I am sore tempted, world,  
To leave you and your woes.  
To find a quiet Tudor house  
And bury myself in solitude.

The sound of silence is alluring,  
As is the gentle seclusion.  
The forgetting of the race of man  
And being naught but myself.

I should love to immerse  
In nature, words, and music,  
And let you, O chaotic world,  
Run your own frantic race.

Sophia White

## **That Bitter Truth**

Here we sit, in twilight worlds,  
Staring at the umber sky.  
We wonder at our fates and sigh  
At our inability to move.  
The sun is dying, that we can see,  
It is old and tired and burnt-out,  
Yet we can do naught but lie about,  
Watch our sun struggle to breathe.  
We are not like the bitter truth,  
Which will go on after we end,  
But like the grass that must bend  
At the will of the wanton wind.  
There is no purpose now, for us,  
Once we know our own doom,  
Our evanescent lives, our lasting tomb,  
Unless we should cling to that bitter truth.

Sophia White

## **The Beautiful**

They would seem to our eyes clothed in rags and in tears  
Bound in shackles that chafe their pale wrists.  
It would seem to our eyes that through icy glass years  
They should struggle to merely exist.

All the nations despise them, the rulers all hate  
The meek innocents under their feet.  
And the sword blade pursues them its bloodlust to sate  
Yet they glory in their own defeat.

Not a mind comprehends them or why they should sing  
With their lives hanging by a mere thread.  
In the prisons that hold them their praises still ring  
Even still with their blood running red.

When another falls silent to never arise  
All their enemies ought to delight.  
But instead they fall silent as victory dies  
In the face of a still-burning light.

All the world seems to darken in that little blaze  
That is pure and as fair as a dove.  
Pale the hands wet with blood, and how shaken the gaze  
In the light of that bright golden love.

And the martyrs all dance in their garments of white  
At the throne of the King of all Kings.  
And they bathe in the Holy of Holies' pure light  
As their praises eternally ring.

Sophia White

## The Constant Wolf

Friends, they come and go,  
Flowing and ebbing, as the tide.  
When one steps away, is gone,  
Into their place another will slide.  
I wonder, 'What friend will last?  
Who shall remain true and trusting? '  
A part of me goes with each passing.  
Will I slowly be chipped into nothing?  
I love them all dear, and always shall,  
But who can dictate our paths and errands?  
They may go, but friend they shall remain.  
And yet – not the same sort of friends.  
To keep a friend, shackled by one's side,  
Is to keep a bird from its freedom flight.  
I will not be the one to darken  
Someone's destiny with my night.  
But what, then, is left for me?  
Am I to slowly ebb away?  
I should not think this is friendship,  
To sow seeds of decay.  
I need one friend. One friend to stay.  
I find no one. They will all, by and by,  
Drift their separate rivers.  
And here am I, with naught but a sigh.  
I look around and what should take my eye?  
A ragged, hug-worn little thing. A play toy  
Bought long-ago in Helen, ages past.  
An abounding solace and silent joy.  
Timber, little wolf, watching with  
Those glassen, obsidian eyes.  
He may not talk, or cock his head,  
But he will always be mine.

Sophia White

## **The Cows and I**

As I was walking through the woods  
I came upon a pair of cows –  
On black, a giant mother, her udder full,  
One white, her calf,  
Standing in a muddy little pool.

I paused and leaned upon the fence.  
I thought I saw the big one tense.  
They fixed their wetted eyes upon my face  
And stood stone still.  
Neither moved in their respective place.

It came to me that they were awed –  
The presence of Man in their humble spot  
Before them, still and silent. Merely seeing  
The mighty Lord  
Of earth and creatures in it – overbearing!

Or were they trembling at the sight  
Of one whose dark green eyes were, like  
The leopard or the lion, at the front?  
A predator!  
Perhaps a wolf-thing out upon the hunt!

And then a third idea hatched:  
Mayhap 'twere I being watched  
By two strong beasts with proud and grand disdain!  
Did they think me  
An intruder in their sacrosanct domain?

Long I thought, and pondered this.  
Was there some detail I had missed?  
Some frightened chill? Some haughty frown or glare?  
What did they think  
Of me – this silent as a stone still pair?

And then a light gleamed to life  
In my poor, befuddled mind:  
These two creatures simply didn't care  
Who or what I was –  
They were hardly even conscious I was there!

Sophia White

## **The Doomed Student**

She has piles and piles of papers to write.  
She has miles and miles of sources to cite.

She has many and many a book to read.  
She has rows upon rows of gardens to weed.

She has dozens and dozens of lectures to hear.  
She has hundreds of thousands of exams to fear.

She has work topping school topping tests topping dates.  
She's hours behind and she's still running late.

She has to-do lists that stretch from here to Peru.  
She has no time to dawdle, no hours to lose.

She's got summaries to write and figures to add,  
But she just sits around writing poems like mad.

Sophia White

## **The Girl with Stars in Her Eyes**

She looked up one night  
A clear and star-strewn night  
And saw the gleaming specks of light  
And when she looked away  
The stars were caught in her eyes.

She walked on through the day  
The blaring, sun-filled day  
But it did not light her way  
Instead she was led  
By the stars in her eyes.  
She saw stars everywhere  
In the corners of everywhere  
Laying to her the whole world bare  
And she loved everything  
Because of the stars in her eyes.

Poor girl, who will one day learn  
Who will, with ugly shock, learn  
By a dark and evil, unexpected turn  
That the world is not really  
Full of stars like her eyes.

Sophia White

## The Great Purple (Ersatz) Limericks

(this is a terrible poem, and sickeningly facetious. I wrote it several yeas ago.)

There once was a word known as "purple"  
Which everyone claimed rhymed with "rubber"  
But this, as you know,  
Just isn't so  
So "violet" soon replaced "purple".

Some people just cannot get  
Why we must say "Violet"  
But purple is gone,  
Rejected and done  
'Cause rubber would not rhyme with it.

So when you are ancient and hunched  
If you talk to the youngsters too much  
And out of your lips  
The word purple slips  
The youngsters will all think you're touched.

If you hobble to the library  
And pick up a new dictionary  
No matter how you flip  
And gnaw on your lip  
The word purple it just will not carry.

You might even call up the President  
Who'll say, "To me it's quite evident  
That your missing word  
Is very absurd  
I've heard no language having it! "

I'm sorry to tell youm my friends,  
That all things must come to an end.  
But don't insist rubber  
Must rhyme with purple  
'Cause it sure as peas throws off my limericks!

Sophia White

## **The Greatest Smell on Earth (Poetry in Prose)**

Tall windows stretch from floor to ceiling. Antique light lances through the beaten glass, and motes of dust dance sunlit to the oh-so-soft Bach playing from a phonograph. Two high-backed leather chairs of soft burgundy stand silent and still, worn by years of quiet children sitting in them sideways, back to armrest. A low cherry wood table holds many curious baubles... a globe wrought of gemstones, a telescope tube of ivory, a small figurine of a man holding a lantern aloft, all wreathed in dusty auras of antiquity. And along the tall and shelved walls, books are neatly arranged, broken now and then by an odd stone or a seashell, or a brass vase full of feathers. And I stand in the center of the room and breathe in... very... deeply...

Sophia White

## **The Humanist**

It's not in the sky, not in the earth.  
There's nothing in memory or tomorrow.  
Look in dreams, search through sorrow,  
Nothing in death, nothing in birth.  
There's no one waiting at the rainbow's end,  
No secret lover, no hidden friend.  
Each to his own, and his own alone,  
Each his road alone must wend.

Looking right, there's emptiness.  
Looking left, the world is bleak.  
Alone, we're shy, afraid, too weak  
To stand in that nothingness.  
But reaching out with a shaking hand  
Into the barren, thirsty land  
Lying low and stark, we grope the dark,  
But hark – no heart to understand.

This life must be lived in solitude.  
Our eyes are too nearsighted to see  
Anyone else that could possibly be  
Bleeding nearby, and we conclude  
That we are alone. And we are right  
For who would walk into such a night  
And take our hand – help us stand  
And understand our hopeless plight?

Sophia White

## **The Kids Next Door**

You two are notorious  
So impishly glorious  
Terrible, horrible kids.

You're never obedient  
(You're mom is too lenient.)  
Always, forever in trouble.

You're impolite neighbors  
Who ask too many favors  
Which you never, ever return.

You're so very, very bad  
And make others mad  
With your wicked, wild ways.

But I like you two boys  
And your loud, raucous noise  
No matter how I try not to.

Sophia White

## **The Land Behind (or) I Can See**

There is a land behind the sun  
That's made of cotton clouds  
And runs with rivers flowing full  
Of the blood of the sun,  
As it slides and slips  
And suddenly dips  
Behind the horizon.

And this land behind the sun  
Appears to just a few  
Who can see those secret lands  
That are there, but not quite.  
(If you are like me,  
For I can see.)  
It is a fleeting, wondrous sight.

And when I see the Land Behind,  
I cannot help but wonder...  
Who lives between the mountains  
Of cloud and by the streams?  
What sort of beings?  
What manner of things?  
It seems a land of dreams.

After all, in a land of cotton mountains  
And rivers of sunblood,  
Anything can live and dance  
What a wonderful world must be!  
I wish I could go  
To this land that few know.  
I suppose I should be grateful I can See.

For if I could not, indeed how dull  
This life would soon become.  
To be unable to see the Lands  
That hide Behind the Sun!

Sophia White

## **The Lighthouse Beacon**

Assurances. Assurances.  
"I love you."  
"Never leave you."  
Then a storm.

The lighthouse beacon  
Shines with light  
Loving light.  
Then explodes.

Promises. Promises.  
"It's alright."  
"We'll get through."  
Then the sirens sound.

Why?

Prayers. Prayers.  
Giv'n with tears  
Faithful tears.  
Then knife words.

The lighthouse beacon  
Shines with light  
Loving light.  
Then explodes.

Laughter. Laughter.  
Smiles and joy  
Rapturous joy!  
Then Hell.

Why?

The lighthouse beacon  
(Meant to protect!)  
Guides the ship -  
Into the rocks.

WHY?

Sophia White

## 'The Lot of the Poet'

The lot of the poet is no easy one.  
Such burdens weigh the hands that wield the pen!  
A poem cannot just get up and run,  
A witty string of puns or pretty verse,  
But must embody something wholly new  
Which no ear has ever heard before.  
The poet must see with a different view  
Than hoi poloi or audience or critics.  
He must not only find a lens unknown,  
But create it and shape it with his words  
Until it is perspective all his own,  
And then – I fear his work's not yet begun –  
He must discover if his lens will work,  
Whether it's a telescope he's made,  
Or a microscope or just a glass,  
He's got to test it through the sun and shade  
Be sure it isn't flawed or loose in places,  
Which, I fear, such things so often are.  
And after endless hours spent fine-tuning,  
With his finished product up to par  
With utter originality of mind,  
He must discover what he wants to see.  
His travels may find him anywhere,  
Peering for hours at the simplest of things,  
To find out what his view will show him,  
Something never viewed by man before.  
This search for elucidation may indeed  
Last the poet years and still years more,  
Until at last, with certainly past all else,  
He knows he's found it, whatever it may be,  
And he sits down in a daze of wordless wonder,  
Picks up pen and paper silently,  
And then, O reader, is his work begun.

Sophia White

## **The Making of Kites**

The world runs black with inken words  
With all the thoughts of Men.  
The seas churn froth with theories  
Recurring time and again.

The hast'ning feet of philosophy  
Run blind with slakeless thirst,  
Pursuing answers ceaselessly  
For fear their worlds should burst.

The hourglass is turned again  
The glinting sands run thin.  
All eyes looking endlessly  
For ways out and ways in.

Thoughts turn inward, thoughts go out  
A melee of jumbled sounds.  
Men make kites of hopeful words,  
But they never leave the ground.

Sophia White

## The Martyr

Clatt'ring, cross the cobblestone street  
The sun shone down with unbearable heat  
Striking the man on the hard wood seat  
Of the cart.  
'Oh Lord, dear saviour, ' he softly prayed,  
'I've followed you, walked in your ways  
I've preached your gospel, sung your praise  
All my life.'  
His eyes went skyward, despite the sun's glare,  
Searching for a miracle that just wasn't there,  
Drew a deep breath of the stagnant air  
And shuddered.  
Then, with a jolt, the cart went still,  
They hauled him down on the top of the hill,  
He sagged in their grip, bereft of will,  
Despairing.  
Was there a crowd? He did not know,  
Nor cared to look as they shoved him low,  
His stomach churned, his heart was cold  
And trembling.  
He lay on his stomach, hands at his side,  
His fear and agony he could not hide  
When suddenly a voice crept into his mind  
And it said -  
'My son, do not fear, I will never forsake you,  
It is in your need I am nearest to you,  
My love is strong, my love is true.  
Do not fear! '  
And peace flooded him from head to heel  
Peace such as he'd never though he could feel  
And he never even heard the rasp of the steel  
As it fell.

Sophia White

## The Monopoly Man

The wind, like a dark gray Sportscar, swept through plum Virginia,  
The moon was a ghostly Thimble over red Indiana.  
The road was a pale green sidewalk through misty Properties,  
And the Monopoly Man came striding,  
Striding – striding –  
The Monopoly Man came striding past the Electric Company.

He'd a tall black hat on his forehead, a white bowtie at his chin,  
A coat of the finest velvet, and breeches of black satin.  
They fitted with never a wrinkle; his shoes were finely shined!  
And he strode with a jaunty sparkle,  
His shepherd's cane a-sparkle,  
His gray moustache a-sparkle, under the haughty sky.

To Baltic Avenue he clattered, and clashed near a small Green House,  
And he tapped with his cane on the shutters, but heard not e'en a mouse.  
Then he whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there,  
But Mr. Parker's flame-haired daughter,  
Jess, Mr. Parker's daughter,  
Patting a short-haired Scottie with silvery metal hair.

And dark in Mediterranean, a window shutter creaked,  
Where Jon the Rider listened, his face was gray and peaked.  
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like moldy tin,  
But he loved Mr. Parker's daughter,  
Mr. Parker's red-lipped daughter,  
Dumb as a dog he listened with a tight-lipped, nasty grin –

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after Free Parking tonight,  
And I shall return with the paper gold, before tomorrow's midnight.  
Then we shall build our Hotel, on the blue of Boardwalk's space!  
So look for me in the Gardens,  
Sunny Marvin Gardens,  
I'll come to thee in the Gardens, though Hell should bar the way! "

And he reared upright on his tip-toes, he scarce could reach her hand,  
But she loosened her hair in the casement, his face burned like a brand.  
As the scarlet sheet of perfume came tumbling over his breast,  
He kissed its waves in the moonlight,  
(Oh! Sweet waves in the moonlight!)  
Then he twirled his cane in the moonlight, the struck off to the northwest.

He did not come in dawning, he did not come at noon,  
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,  
When the road was a ribbon of moonlight. a pale green parceled square,  
The blue-coat troop came marching –  
Marching – Marching –  
Mr. Parker's bobbies came marching to the Gardens' yellow square.

They'd said no word to Parker, but took their leave instead,  
And bowed to the redhaired daughter, and she inclined her head.  
Two of them knelt by the pansies, muskets at their sides,

There was death at every corner,  
Hell at one dark corner,  
For Jess could see through the peonies, the road that he would stride.

The girl stood up to attention, the Bobbies exchanged no jest,  
But built for themselves a barricade with cards from Community Chest.  
"Now keep good watch!" she hissed at them. She heard the Monopoly Man say,  
"Look for me in the Gardens,  
Sunny Marvin Gardens,  
I'll come to thee in the Gardens, though Hell should bar the way!"

Meanwhile her lover hastened, the moonlight on his face,  
As he crept around the Barrow asleep on St. Charles Place.  
He ducked on States Avenue, when the Ship went steaming past,  
Then crept along the spaces,  
The cold, pale green spaces,  
Then finally reached the corner! Free Parking – his at last!

He bundled up the money with many a furtive glance,  
Then stole along the northern edge, with a wink at grinning Chance.  
His steps were light and dapper, his face was full of stars!  
For the road lay bare in the moonlight,  
The road to the Gardens in the moonlight,  
After many unlucky die rolls – "The jackpot is finally ours!"

Plot-tlot; tlot-tlot; had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;  
Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot; in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?  
Down Pacific Avenue, o'er Go To Jail,  
Jon's horse came a trotting –  
Trotting – trotting –  
Then there Jon was in the Gardens, his face a grinning pale.

Then – tap! in the frosty silence. Tap! In the echoing night.  
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!  
Her eyes grew wide for a moment, resolution framed her face,  
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,  
her musket shattered the moonlight,  
Shattered the silent moonlight and the Bobbies set to the chase.

He turned; he ran to the westward; he did not know who stood,  
Tall with her hand on the musket, her hounds after his blood.  
Not till he reached Oriental, his face grew gray to hear,  
The Bobbies breath on his shoulder,  
His money-bag o'er his shoulder,  
He had come to her by the moonlight, and she betrayed him with a sneer.

They clapped his wrists in irons, he shrieked a curse to the sky,  
As the Bobbies turned him southward, the money bag held high.  
Blood-red were his eyes in the gold moon, smoke-black were his shodden heels,  
When they shut him up in the Jailhouse,  
The Southwest corner's Jailhouse,

And he sat in misery in the Jailhouse, beside a Spinning Wheel.

And so whene'er you play, my friends, this game Monopoly,  
Remember what reward you'll get for cheating villainy  
Sooner or later, they'll catch you. You should always know  
That's why they made the dice,  
The six-sided piebald dice.  
They'll send you straight to jail – without e'en passing Go!

Sophia White

## **The Painted**

In the whirl of colors, kaleidoscope of fear,  
The Painted faces sway and twist and leap.  
Variety intensified, the world a piebald sphere,  
The Painted are the weavers from the Deep.  
The Painted are the keeners from the Deep.

A flash of burning crimson, a taste of siren blue,  
The Painted smiles curled in twisted hate.  
Spiraling in ribbons, a web ensaring you  
The Painted's songs will insincerely sate.  
The Painted's words will insincerely sate.

Twirling fans of paper, the colors blend and mesh,  
The Painted eyes are watching everywhere.  
Balloons are bursting color, the rainbow's here in flesh,  
The Painted ones! Every man beware!  
The Painted ones! Every soul beware!  
The Painted ones! Everyone beware!

Sophia White

## **The Passage of Time**

Time, Time, Time  
Is slowly walking by.

Time, Time, Time  
All the world is in his eyes.

He rumbles past  
Like boulders grinding  
His shoulders bow; he sighs.

Time, Time, Time  
Ignoring rhythmic rhyme

Time, Time, Time  
Slowly rumbling by.

He lifts his head  
Ever so slightly  
And meets my eager eyes.

Time, Time, Time  
Yellowing leaves, crimsoning wine.

Time, Time, Time  
With aching, weary eye.

His frown grows deep  
And I frown too.  
He looks away. I weep.

Sophia White

## **The Pirate Poet**

Sophia lived in Lundontown  
Before she put to sea  
She'd been the toast of Lundontown  
Till she took up piracy.

Her hair is black, and thick with curls  
Of laughs she has a plenty.  
Her eyes are blue, she's a pretty girl  
Her age is two and twenty.

Sophia is the captain of  
A ship of wide reknown.  
It's dubbed the 'Robin Hood', the love  
Of pirates all around.

Her sails are green, the Lincoln hue  
To honor the thief of old.  
Her prow is sharp, her rudder true  
Her nameplate is of gold.

Sophia spends her jolly days  
The scourge of the Atlantic sea.  
When resting from her robbing ways  
She writes down poetry.

Sophia White

### **The Poet, on Losing Her Mind, Laments:**

Every time I sit to write  
Or get some work done – finally!  
I find my mind leagues away  
In Some Closet – writing poetry.  
Mind, won't you come back to me?  
You're always in Some Closet.  
Why'd I even write that poem  
About this place, Some Closet?  
Well, darn, it's too late now.  
But I wish my Mind would return,  
And how!

Sophia White

### **The Poet, on Seeing a Mess, Groans:**

Ach! What has happened here?  
Who left these towels on the floor?  
And all these clothes, so that I  
Cannot even shut the door?  
Who dropped a banana peel  
And did not pick it up?  
Whose socks are these?  
Who's sticky, dusty cup?  
Who would leave a pickle jar  
On the desk – without a lid?  
What? It's MY room? Ah, so it is.  
Who made this mess? Well, I suppose I did.  
I think I'll just sneak away  
Perhaps no one will see.  
I'll just hide in some closet  
And write more poetry.

Sophia White

**The Poet, While Hiding in Some Closet, Gloats:**

I'm hiding in some closet!  
Hee hee hee!  
I'm hiding in some closet!  
You can't find me!  
I'm hiding in some closet!  
Don't like to clean!  
I'm hiding in some closet!  
And writing poetry!

Sophia White

## **The Poets Are Lost**

The poets are lost! The poets are lost!  
Have we no Shakespeare, have we no Frost?

Who is the voice of the poets today?  
Who now swings on birches by untrodden ways?

Where is the metaphor? Where is the rhyme?  
Hesperus is sunk forever in Time.

The classics lie dead, nevermore read,  
Roads not taken, Ozymandias dead.

Few stars rise anew to brighten the skies  
Should one Whitman flare, a thousand Plaths die.

The poets are lost! The poets are lost!  
No romantic Shakespeares, no down-to-earth Frosts.

The Muses have vanished – where have they gone?  
We're trapped in the Waste Land, no hope of dawn.

The seas of inspiration and wisdom lay dry.  
Oh, weep for the poets as for Adonais!

The poets are lost! The poets are lost!  
Shakespeare forgotten, and neglected lies Frost.

Sophia White

## The Potato Man

The wind was a torrent of darkness across the potato fields.  
The moon was the only witness, a sliver as cold as steel.  
The road was a ribbon of moonlight, tread by a moonlit thief,  
Who came a-hunting potatoes –  
Potatoes – potatoes –  
Who came a-hunting potatoes, baring potato-hued teeth.

He'd a greedy scowl on his fore'ead, a greedy drool on his chin,  
A coat that smelled of potato, and breeches of potato skin.  
They fitted with many a wrinkle – in which potatoes could hide –  
And he came with an ancient shovel,  
A sturdy, trusty shovel,  
A thief and an ancient shovel, under an ancient sky.

Then in the darkness he paused, and smiled at a glimmer of moonlight,  
At the glimmer of another shovel, bouncing at shoulder height.  
He whistled a tune to the shovel, and who should whistle back  
But the potato farmer's daughter,  
Tess, the farmer's daughter,  
Plaiting a brown potato peel into her hair, long and black.

And dark in the dark potato field, the foursome set to work,  
Two shovels and two lovers, while the hired-hand and his pitchfork  
Watched with eyes of madness, and smelled of moldy hay,  
For the hired-hand loved the farmgirl,  
The beautiful, red-lipped farmgirl,  
And dumb as a dog he listened, and heard the robber say –

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize tonight!  
I'll find a potato worth yellow gold before the morning light.  
And if I find it quickly, I'll cook it during the day,  
Then look for me by the moonlight,  
Watch for me by the moonlight,  
I'll come to thee by the moonlight, bearing potato soufflé!

He rose upright with his shovel, and plunged it into the earth,  
And she tied up her hair with a potato peel, chuckling fit to burst.  
As the bright cascade of laughter came tumbling out of her mouth,  
He found the potato in the moonlight!  
(Oh, giant potato in the moonlight!)  
Then he threw his shovel o'er his shoulder and jogged away to the south.

He did not come in dawning, he did not come at noon,  
But after the tawny sunset, after the rise o' the moon,  
When the road was a gypsy's ribbon through the potato field,  
The farmer's girl was waiting –  
Waiting – waiting –  
The farmer's Tess was waiting in the potato field.

She'd said goodnight to her father, laid down her pretty head,  
But soon's she heard him snoring, she leaped out of her narrow bed,  
And slipped like a wraith through the casement, her shovel at her side,

And now she sat `mongst the potatoes,  
Their precious, precious potatoes,  
And Tess could see in the distance the road that he would hike.

Then suddenly out of the darkness, a familiar figure appeared,  
Brandishing the giant potato and raising a lofty cheer:  
"You kept good watch! " and he kissed her, she heard her robber say –  
"You looked for me by the moonlight,  
Watched for me by the moonlight,  
I came to thee by moonlight, the potato on my tray! "

She twisted her hands behind her – the potato looked oh! So good!  
She wiped her hands on her skirt to rid them of dirt and mud.  
They stretched and strained in the darkness, the seconds crawled by like years,  
Till now on the stroke of midnight,  
Hot on the stroke of midnight,  
The tip of one finger touched it! The potato at last was hers!

The tip of one finger touched it, she strove yet more for the rest,  
Then – Up went the thief to attention, a pitchfork at his chest!  
He'd stolen potatoes for many a year; he would not steal again,  
For the pitchfork flashed in the moonlight,  
Flashed so cruel in the moonlight  
And struck the thief in the moonlight, and the deed was done.

Tess stood frozen by the body, shedding not a tear,  
The hired-hand's vict'ry cry ringing in her ears.  
Ringing o'er the potato field, ringing o'er the hills,  
But Tess still held the potato –  
Potato – potato –  
Oh, Tess still held the potato! She stood up straight and still.

The steam rose in the frosty silence! The steam rose in the echoing night!  
Closer she crept, and closer! Her face was like a light.  
Her eyes grew wide for a moment, she drew one great deep breath,  
Then her hands moved quick in the moonlight,  
Her hands flashed in the moonlight,  
And shoved the potato in the moonlight down the murderer's throat!

The potato burned his insides, burned as hot as the sun.  
He grasped his smoking stomach, but the deed was a'ready done.  
He fell to the ground moaning, his face ghostly white.  
Thus the farmer's hired-hand,  
The potato farmer's hired-hand,  
Killed the robber dead in the moonlight, then died by the robber's soufflé.

Away Tess ran like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,  
With the hired-hand smoking behind her, her robber-love at his side.  
Blood red were her eyes in the gold moon, wine-red were her rosebud lips,  
When she fell on her shovel in the potato field,  
And it pierced her heart in the potato field,  
And she lay in her blood in the potato field, her "trusty" shovel at her side.

And still of a winter's night, they say, out in the potato fields,  
With the moon as the only witness, a sliver as cold as steel,  
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight, two shovels come a-digging  
A-digging up potatoes –  
Potatoes – potatoes –  
A-digging up potatoes in the potato field.

Sophia White

## **The Star Pilot**

I know a man who has a ship  
That sails among the stars.  
He once took me for a ride  
To circle planet Mars.

His ship is made of weathered wood  
With sails of spider thread.  
Her name is 'Spherie, ' a good old ship  
With flags of bloody red.

We went sailing by cosmic wind  
Through inky starry seas.  
I shook hands with Perseus  
And bowed to Pleiades.

Virgo took me for a dance  
Along the Milky Way,  
And Taurus gave a snort as I  
Laughed at the Kids' play.

The Herdsman waved genially  
And I waved gaily too.  
The Hunter blew a strong salute  
By the light of Betelgeuse blue.

And so I sailed a magic sea  
With the starry populace.  
I wish I could forever stay  
In that enchanted place.

Sophia White

## **The Three Quills**

For five months we have met  
One and Two and Three.  
And shared our tales and critiqued  
Him and you and me.  
Our writing family.

A few more weeks to meet.  
Our time is running thin.  
Sand sifts through my fingers  
As our light goes dim.  
But Blotters shall not win!

We may drift apart, indeed.  
Miles between us grow.  
But when some are close as we  
They cannot die, you know.  
For God hath made it so.

We shall write, and write on!  
One for all, all for one.  
The work is not nearly done  
For One and Two and Three.

Our farewells may be said  
And paths may wind away,  
But our words are evermore  
And will run with the day.  
They shall not fade away.

And as those words are read  
As those tales are ink  
They shall serve between us  
As an iron, binding link.  
Our ship can never sink.

And long shall live the Quills.

Sophia White

## **The Way is Shut**

There must be a door here somewhere:  
One that isn't watched.  
For that door I'd never dare  
So securely is it locked.

This room is getting grayer  
Before my restless eyes  
I lift a desperate prayer  
For an escape route to arise.

The way is shut! The way is shut!  
I'm trapped - inside this sordid hut!  
I'd more than love to get out - but  
The only way I see is shut.

I try to settle my rowdy soul  
And live through one more day.  
Breathing in, review my role,  
Breathing out, review the play.

I fear my aerobic exercise  
If failing me quite fast  
As panic deep begins to rise  
My calm can never last.

The way is shut! The way is shut!  
I'm writhing in this prison-hut!  
How I want to get out - but  
The only door there is - is shut.

Sophia White

## The Wisdom of Sophia

She began to gather cards. From every land and nation,  
From the planets, from the stars, she assembled all her cards,  
With calmest contemplation.  
Her cards far outnumbered the ace up to the king,  
No, the decks she had plundered were a universal wonder  
For together they held Everything.

Once her collection was complete, she assembled all her cards,  
Like an endless paper fleet she spread them at her feet,  
And stood aloof to regard.  
With discretion, without haste, she considered every one,  
Time wore upon her face but still she stood in place,  
Fixed and intent as the Sun.

When her judgments were passed she knelt to the floor  
Amid the cards amassed. Her verdicts all were cast.  
Her mind went to her chore.  
She sorted through the decks with premeditated plan.  
Purposeful and circumspect, every discard closely checked,  
She sorted with cognizant command.

At last, with the best, with the chosen of the pack,  
(Forgotten lay the rest) she began the final test.  
She began to slowly stack,  
On their narrow edges she began to balance cards,  
Making squares, making wedges, brilliant shelves and ledges,  
In a tower avant-garde.

Never had such been seen, this tower built of chosen cards  
That held upon them Everything, so crisp and strong and clean,  
To reach unto the stars.  
Up it went, and her hands steadily raised them high.  
In distant desert lands the people saw the tower stand,  
Rising in the far-off sky.

Ah! The wonder of all! This grand tower tall!  
Never to fall. The world stands enthralled  
And in ecstasy call:  
"Huzzah! Huzzah! " On their knees they crawl,  
Amazed by it all, by her smile that thawed  
The ice of her jaw.

And the gentlest breeze, from heaven above,  
With uncaring ease roamed over the seas  
To the tower thereof.  
From Elohim it came, to the tower it blew,  
Which fell at His Name: forgotten by fame,  
And remembered by few.

Sophia White

## **The World is Quiet Here**

The door is shut, the window is open.  
The gossamer curtains are dancing in the breeze  
And I hear, distantly, a squirrel chattering in the trees.  
The world is quiet here.

No music plays but that of Silence and Solitude.  
The house is full of it, the blessed quiet.  
No greater joy is there but freedom from chaos and riot.  
The world is quiet here.

Here I sit, seemingly alone, but not quite alone.  
There are three of us, in thoughtful conference:  
Me, my Lord, and my Muse, in creative ambience.  
The world is quiet here.

Now and then I write a poem, now a song,  
Or another chapter in my book, my mind's child.  
I love this world, this isolation, so calm, so mild.  
The world is quiet here.

Sophia White

## **The World of the Toothless Alligators**

I wish I lived in the winsome world of the toothless alligators.  
There there is no pain, no tears, and no hate,  
In the far, far, world of the toothless alligators.

You can lick the leaves of the topaz trees  
And taste their zany zing.  
Or hear the call of the Teetertall  
With its silly, saucy ring.  
You can float on down the River Hound  
That howls with a happy howl,  
Then swim all day in Rosypop Bay  
And use Tickel leaves for towels.  
You may climb the slopes of Mount Cantaloupe  
And look down o'er Popindorf Plain.  
You could set sail on a Kissing Whale,  
(You'll never be the same!)  
Or you can share a flagon with the Great Gulp Dragon  
And hear his wild tales.  
Have a great time with the Poiple Lion  
During summer's giggling gales.  
But bestest of all we could climb the Wall  
Into the Great Orange Field of `Taters,  
And there we'd dance and sing and prance  
With the wonderful toothless alligators.

Those wonderful toothless alligators!  
How they sing and laugh!  
With a hearty ha-ho! And a deep bass Hum!  
The best time you'll ever have  
Is when you're with the toothless alligators  
Who feed on the topaz trees  
And drink the waters of the Yayay River  
And play with Polka-dot bees.  
You never have to worry about bedtime  
Cause the alligators never sleep,  
You can stay up all night and joke about  
Till the Earliest Early Bird peeps.  
In the world of the toothless alligators  
No one cries and no one dies  
You can live year after year with nary a tear  
Under purple-green peppermint skies.

Yes, there is no place like the winsome world of the toothless alligators.  
There there is no pain, to tears, no hate,  
In the far, far world of the toothless alligators.

Sophia White

## There's A World Out There

There's a world out there! Now I see it.  
Opened like a book for me to read.  
But not page-by-page, flipping dully,  
But wild rovings, random and untamed,  
Because it doesn't run from front to back  
Or start to end, or follow any line.  
Each page is unto itself, independent.  
And it won't mind if I take out the ones  
That throw my heart into the sky just like  
A kite, that just discovered it can fly.  
There's a world out there! Now I see it.  
It isn't just a curtain hung around  
The place I know, with Elsewhere painted on it.  
The only curtain was my ignorance,  
But now, it's pulled away and burned forever,  
And I see beyond the false horizon.  
No doubt lingers, no fulfillment is there  
Of contentment with the home and hearth.  
(Though, mind you, those are still the root.)  
The satisfaction earned from years of stillness,  
Of blankly sitting in the same wood chair  
Gazing out the same stark window panes  
At the same thin trees, the same old town.  
That satisfaction now is lost to me.  
There's a world out there! Now I see it.  
And what's more, I don't just have to dream  
Of oceans, mountains, skies yet unexplored,  
For I can go and go until I die.  
I can reach each corner of the world  
And further, I suppose, if I desire.  
I think of those who would frown on this.  
Is it wrong to have a roving spirit?  
It cannot be; for Who would make a world  
Just to entice and dangle temptingly?  
Were wonders not created for the seeing;  
For the testimony of their Source?  
I think it so, so I shall go, and see.

Sophia White

## **These Past Few Nights**

These past few nights  
Have been the deepest  
I have ever known.

These past few nights  
Have been the darkest  
I have ever known.

These past few nights  
Have been the strangest  
I have ever known.

It is as if the night  
Has suddenly become  
A master at his work.

I love it.

Sophia White

## **They Come Again - in the Dark**

Please – anything but the voices!  
Down the hall, wafting like a vapor  
Black and heavy as the earth.  
Nerves all tighten enough to balance on  
But my balance is thrown  
By the voices.  
Please!  
Stop!

Sophia White

## **This is the Moment**

This is the moment the planets align  
And the stars hold their breath in the sky...  
This is the heartbeat you'll never forget  
Though you may never know why...  
This is the chance you've waited to take,  
When you will risk everything...  
This is the dream you've held in your heart,  
The song you've been yearning to sing...  
This is when everything falls into place,  
And your place in the world is made clear...  
This is the answer to all of your questions,  
And you suddenly know why you're here...  
This is the moment of incurable joy,  
The mysterious, inebrious bliss...  
This is the time when you're sure of yourself,  
This is your very first kiss.

Sophia White

### **Three Mice Who Hoped**

Six mice stared out their door.  
The Cat was crouching there.  
"Have hope! " one cried.  
"The Dog will come and scare it away! "  
But one mouse ran out, gave up.  
In the jaws of Cat he died.

Five mice stared out their door.  
Still the feline purred.  
"Have hope! " one cried.  
"The Dog will be here soon! "  
But one mouse could wait no more.  
In the jaws of Cat she died.

Four mice stared out their door.  
The Cat was waiting for them, too.  
"Have... hope..." one said.  
But one mouse snapped and darted out.  
And soon, in jaws of Cat, was dead.

Three mice stared out their door.  
The Cat sat ready, claws extended.  
"Have... h-hope..." one said.  
But one mouse squealed and started –  
The one who'd spoken held her down.  
"Have hope! "

For hours more the three mice sat.  
The watched, trembling, the mighty Cat.  
But still: "Have hope! " they cried.  
Then came the Dog.  
The Cat scurried away to hide.  
The mice were free at last.

Sophia White

## **To Be in Scotland**

Oh, to be in Scotland,  
The land of kilts and pipes,  
Oh, to see the lochs aglow  
Under star strewn nights.

Oh, to be in Scotland,  
Riding on the moor,  
Oh, to feel the heather  
And hear the ocean roar.

Oh, to be in Scotland,  
With England at her feet,  
Oh, to hear that wild brogue  
That all in Scotland speak.

Sophia White

## **To Be Sure**

I am currently engaged in a chess match.  
The stakes are high – a future.  
Somehow when my strategy gets torn  
I find a way – to suture.

More often, though, I find myself in Check.  
So far, I evade – capture.  
It seems I shall be playing this gruesome game  
Until my death – or rapture.

Indeed, I am sly, and clever as a fox, for now.  
I can stay alive – be sure!  
But one small slip... no! Better to not think it.  
See how I am strong – mature!

I can slip into the smallest crack and live,  
Make use of each available – feature.  
I have made it this far, on my own, you know.  
I've had no master – no teacher.

But how I wish, I wish this game would end.  
To great already is – my expenditure.  
Though I have always found another way  
Another way – to insure.

To be sure.

Sophia White

## **To Ellen and Sarah: Friends of Yesterday**

I think often of you, olden day playmates.  
Do you ever remember me?  
I think back to you, Ellen.  
Remember the camels in the playground?  
Remember the days when I was Joe  
And you, so graciously, Frank?  
Remember playing dolls in the basement?  
Remember Danny and the Building Blocks?  
Oldest and dearest of friends, Ellen.  
I think back to you, Sarah.  
Remember Mrs. Parish?  
Remember helping in the library?  
And the time you pushed me  
And I fell, and we laughed?  
Remember the bug cereal?  
I laugh still.  
Sweetest and funniest of friends, Sarah.  
I think of us, the three.  
Always three. Always a trio.  
Always getting foil shapes, Inoko.  
Camping, Pinnacle, GAs, Mrs. Anita.  
Oh, Ellen, Sarah.  
Where are you now?  
Where are you now?

Sophia White

## **To The Old**

Ah! Crownéd heads of gilded years!  
In robes with trains of practiced time,  
Slippered in pastel sunrise,  
Belted with vibrant sunset,  
Walking past in company sublime!

Ah! Timelines cross thy astute faces,  
Maps that trace the wisdom of ages,  
Knowest thou only the intricacies,  
Esteemed good and dread fallacies,  
More wealth upon thee than in history's pages.

Ah! Sagacious heralds of the pending Hand,  
Silently holding up hands of warning,  
Guiding us who so foolishly stray  
While walking the same twisting way,  
Thy steps are bright as the glossy new morning.

Sophia White

## **To The Storyteller**

Spin us a tale, tell us a rhyme,  
What happened "Once upon a time"?  
Give us a ballad, sing us a lay  
Of kings and princes far, far away.  
Spin us a yarn, tell us a story  
Of battles and kingdoms and warriors' glory  
Of princesses cursed, awaiting a kiss  
Of lands full of laughter, beauty, and bliss  
Of forests enchanted and wild bright lions  
Of adventures braved by daring young scions  
Of war and of peace, of love and of hate  
Of apples in Eden that Adam once ate  
Of sparrows in flight and fish in the sea  
Of volcanic eruptions and mountains' majesty  
Tell us! Tell us! Please – tell us all!  
Hurry, do hurry! Speak swiftly and clear  
For our bedtimes draw ever and ever so near –  
Spin us a tale, tell us a rhyme,  
What happened "Once upon a time"?

Sophia White

## **Train**

There goes the train, steaming by.  
The grass waves at its passing.  
The smoke rises before falling.  
I wonder where it goes, and why.

The train goes past me every day.  
The passengers don't notice me  
Watching from the boughs of a tree.  
I want to ride the train, far away...

Sophia White

## Trapped

There is a pair of robins  
Winging over the trees  
Into the watercolor sky.  
And here am I.  
Trapped in this bare room.

The sunlight is lancing  
Through colonnade trees  
Where dust-fairies fly.  
And here am I.  
Trapped behind closed doors.

The narrow path winds  
Away through the forest  
Where ferny glades lie.  
And here am I.  
Trapped by four walls.

A squirrel scampers  
Across the grassy yard  
And meets my eye.  
And here am I.  
Trapped at a hardwood desk.

Sophia White

## Tree of Light

When I in shades of blue repose  
On trodden leaves of wildrose  
With heavens speared by purple light  
Above me writing twisted night  
And all the world has filled with fright  
As a foul and ill wind blows:

When I in robes of ash fast flee  
Yet all the imps of Hell chase me  
With chatters like a cockroach horde  
And groans like stone scraped on board  
And grass below cuts as a sword  
Perchance I glance a glowing tree:

With limbs adorned in gorious glow  
Defying evil shades below  
With crown spun gold as if by gods  
With light a-lancing crimson rods  
Still, though all else be at odds  
A tree by Elohim's hand sown:

How could I - in such a plight  
Not love that tree so swathed in light?

Sophia White

## Twilight Worlds

Here we sit, in twilight worlds,  
Staring at the umber sky.  
We wonder at our fates and sigh  
At our inability to move.  
The sun is dying, that we can see,  
It is old and tired and burnt-out,  
Yet we can do naught but lie about,  
Watch our sun struggle to breathe.  
We are not like the bitter truth,  
Which will go on after we end,  
But like the grass that must bend  
At the will of the wanton wind.  
There is no purpose now, for us,  
Once we know our own doom,  
Our evanescent lives, our lasting tomb,  
Unless we should cling to that bitter truth.

Sophia White

## Unearthed

"Bloom where you're planted, " they said,  
"From your cradle until you're dead."  
You cried, but meekly bowed down  
Beneath their withering frown.  
"Get the silliness out of your head!  
Plant your feet on the ground, instead! "  
Oh, the tears you let fall!  
Yet you made yourself thrall.  
You watch them walk smugly around,  
Their feet glued to firm ground.  
And you comply, blooming bright.  
Smiling sweetly in the light.  
But oh! In the dark cloak of night!  
You feel the bars of your life  
Constrict and shave like a knife  
Pinning you to earth iron-tight,  
When you long to be in free flight!  
"Bloom where you're planted! " they cry  
When they see you go running by,  
Headed for the open, open sky!  
Your roots are by now grown quite deep  
But you'll never go back to sleep.  
Not now that you've tasted the sky.  
Not now that you've learned how to fly.  
You've unearthed. Now wave sweetly goodbye.

Sophia White

## **Unexplained**

There is this feeling –  
Not an emotion, not a tangible sensation,  
But a deep and unspeakable sense  
That I cannot explain in words or in art.

There is this knowledge,  
That I cannot apply or comprehend,  
And I am unsure if it is real,  
If it bears any truth at all.

There is this desire,  
Not materialistic or emotional,  
But inexplicable and confused,  
An urge to fulfill something, or be something.

There is this feeling –  
I could never explain it at all.  
These words are the closest description,  
And still I remain at an utter loss.

Sophia White

## Unhealthy Habit?

All this reading can't be good  
For a little girl like me.  
My mind always distant in  
Those lands of reverie.

These books are so enchanting  
So difficult to leave  
I can't help but watch enraptured  
As the storytellers weave.

But can it be so healthy  
Even though they say  
"Everyone should read a little  
Every single day! "

At that - perhaps I'd better take  
Advice - read just a little.  
Instead of inhaling books  
Like sleep, water, and vittles.

But if I did, I just know  
In a week I'd die  
From Book Withdrawal disease!  
I dare not even try!

I can't just put my books away  
No matter how unhealthy.  
Guess I'll just let my mind wander  
Forget about being healthy.

Sophia White

## **Unwind**

When the night is full of stars  
And the air of silken voices

When the sky is deep with darkness  
And the moon with silver sorrow

When the trees speak in whispers  
And the world makes no more sound

How still it is  
How easy it is  
To simply  
Let go

Unwind

Sophia White

## unwritten poetry

I wrote a letter  
- Or two -  
Some about this  
That  
And you.  
A rhyme  
A riddle  
Give thumbs a-twiddle  
Write a little more  
Got plenty words  
- in store  
For this  
That  
And you  
A song  
A ditty  
An "Oh! How witty! "  
Little words  
Meaning naught  
For we're taught  
To always be polite.  
But at night  
In the dark mind  
When polite does  
NOT  
Exist...

...  
... that is when I write  
Unwritten  
Poetry...

...  
For this  
That  
And you.

Sophia White

## **Up, Up, and Away**

Up.  
From the ashes.  
From the pain.  
Away.  
From defeat.  
From the blame.  
Up.  
From darkness.  
From the night.  
Away.  
From the terror.  
From the fright.  
Up.  
Into daylight.  
Into the sun.  
Away.  
Into the love.  
Into the One.  
Up.  
Into freedom.  
Into the heights.  
Away.  
Into the heavens.  
Into the sky.  
Up, up, and away -  
- phoenix -  
Rise!

Sophia White

## **Upon a Shooting in Virginia**

Who can comprehend? It is too great.  
Weep all through the night  
Fill the lonesome hours with our tears,  
Wonder numbly at the wasted years  
That shall never be lived.

Who can answer "Why? " It is too deep.  
Stare up at the stars  
That shine softly, seeming not to care  
With all the time and indifference to spare  
On us who wade in tears.

Who can offer solace? It is too sharp,  
This pain which pervades the body  
And slices right to the core of the soul  
And reverberates there like the midnight toll  
Of the gongs that signal death.

Who can move past the memory? It is too real.  
The faces, the dreams, and the fates of those  
Who were loved, by someone, somewhere,  
And who loved as well, but now they're  
Already left behind by Time.

Who can look ahead now? It is too far.  
The future is like happily-ever-after,  
Something we dream of, but do not believe.  
It seems that dreams have ceased to weave  
Their hope into our lives.

Who can acquire confidence? It is too strange,  
This terror which has struck may strike again,  
These things tend to work that way, it seems.  
Does life only fulfill the wicked ones' dreams?  
It certainly appears as such.

Who can comprehend? It is too great.  
Weep all through the night,  
Fill the lonesome hours with our tears.

Sophia White

## Vacillation

You  
  've  
  lost  
your  
  glass  
  e  
  s.

Now  
  I  
  can  
  not  
  see.

Sophia White

## **Vague**

If I could but eliminate  
One word that I so dearly hate  
That simply burns my palate  
Vague.

It isn't how it sounds at all  
That gives me such horrid apall.  
That offense is very small.  
Vague.

No, it is the denotation.  
The ensuing, dark frustration.  
Such a wrathful, cruel sensation.  
Vague.

Too many things are so unclear  
You add to all the darkness here  
And refresh my rain of tears.  
Vague.

I read a word, a verse, a song,  
But get the meaning so very wrong.  
And I wonder, suffer long.  
Vague.

What does it mean? What does it mean?  
What hides in the woven terminology?  
So clear to the writer, but to befuddled me –  
Vague.

Sophia White

## **Voice of the Musebane**

I settle in my chair, pick up my pen,  
Touch it to the paper – and then –  
Horror! There it comes again!

The voice of the Musebane,  
The literary agent of death.

I grimace and try to block it out,  
But what was a whisper is soon a shout,  
Rocking off the walls and all about!

The voice of the Musebane.  
The water to douse the creative flame.

I curse beneath a rolling, angry sigh.  
The words that had begun to fly  
Soon withered in my mind, to die.

The voice of the Musebane.  
The stench that melted words.

I slam my pen into the page.  
Ink sprays as black as my dark rage.  
Is this the lab'ring poet's wage?

The voice of the Musebane.  
The monster that devours tales.

Sophia White

## Waiting Candles

She is sitting, slumped with fatigue.  
The candles in the window burned low.  
The lights on, lighting your path –  
But where are you?

She has waited hours, stretched to eons,  
Waiting for your step upon the porch.  
She will not sleep or eat until you come.  
So where are you?

Her eyes are heavy with the endless waiting.  
But she replaces burnt out candles faithfully,  
Hoping to greet you with the warmth of Home.  
And where are you?

Don't leave her waiting any longer,  
Her heart weak with beating nervously.  
Come home to the warm and burning candles.  
Where are you?

Sophia White

## Wake the Books

O! The never-ending books! End on end,  
Marching like a mass of scholars  
Still the stacks get taller – taller!  
Down the wall, up the hall,  
I can never reach them all!  
Into a fuzzy haze they blend.  
Hundreds – thousands – millions more!  
Cover to cover, spine to spine,  
Endless rows and endless lines  
Bottom to top, they never stop,  
Stacked up to a dizzying drop  
From the ceiling down to the floor.  
Words of wisdom, lines of wit,  
Every thought ever thought by man  
Stretching by the mile – the span!  
Some books wise, some just lies,  
Some with ends full of surprise.  
Every word that ever was writ.  
O! I want to read them all! Every one!  
But my hands can't even brush  
Each cover in a full year once.  
How can I, with one lifetime,  
Even aspire to hope to try?  
One row down and my sand's run!  
O! The never-ending books! How I look!  
Sleeping, needing only hands  
To open them, release their lands.  
Would that I! Would that I  
Could let them fly!  
Would that I could wake the books!

Sophia White

## Water Spoons

The cards are dealt.  
Hold your hand,  
Four cards, two colors,  
Begin the round.  
Pass the cards, quickly now!  
Faster, and faster,  
Round and round,  
Glance and pass,  
Glance and pass,  
Glance and –  
Ah! A match!  
Glance about furtively,  
Watch the spoons –  
Always watching –  
Always passing,  
Passing, glancing,  
(match) , Passing,  
Watching, glancing,  
Passing, watching,  
Passing, (Match!)  
Grab a spoon,  
Soft and swift  
The others dive,  
A melee!  
They emerge  
The loser scowling.  
Hand him the cup,  
The tall, wide cup,  
the brimming cup,  
And he drinks  
And drinks  
And drinks  
... and drinks...  
... and... drinks...  
Empty.  
Begin again.

Sophia White

## **Weakness**

I try, I do, my very best  
To be that City on that Hill.  
I try, I do, my hardest  
To be that Salt and that Light.  
I try, I do, my strongest,  
To be that Voice in the Dark.  
I try, I do! But, dearest,  
There are some days, some times,  
When I cannot help but be  
The Wave, tossed and blown  
By the Wind.

Sophia White

## **Weeping Lebanon**

I would like to go there anon  
And again climb the cedars  
The cedars of Lebanon.

I would like to sail upon  
Once more, the Sea,  
Mediterranean, by Lebanon.

I would like again to run  
Down the streets and play  
With my kin in Lebanon.

Once more visit Dar el Awlad, where sons  
Of deceased live, work, and play,  
At home in Lebanon.

And again watch the rising sun  
Over bomb-torn buildings  
And weeping Lebanon.

Sophia White

## Whale

The sun is low and soft as down.  
Her light sleeps on the water  
In slumber unbroken by sound.

The waves are small and gently slide  
Over each other; liquid silver  
Stretching far and reaching wide.

In the gold and silent haze  
No beast or bird is moving  
In this the gentlest of days.

Then, softly, waves lengthen,  
Heighten, grow strong  
In one place they darken.

Sudden, like a break of thunder  
On a frozen sky,  
The sea is torn asunder.

The waves rip apart and shatter  
Like glass turned liquid.  
And there is something greater:

Slippery-black and shiny white,  
It fills the sky for a moment  
A huge and majestic sight.

Time slows, halts, a second flees  
As in the air it suspends,  
A Lord of all these earthly seas.

Then, slow, it falls, crashes down.  
The water leaps like fire  
High; Sparkling beads all around.

Then it is gone; The sea settles with  
No sound. It sleeps  
And the orca returns to myth.

Sophia White

## **What Am I but a Flute?**

What am I but a flute?  
An instrument to be played.  
Naught but a tool,  
To be held and used at will.  
I cannot play myself,  
Pipe no tune and sing no song,  
I am aglow and smooth  
Beautiful and serene  
But inside, I am as hollow  
As a sky without the sun.

And yet for all my weakness  
I am a flute that is played  
By the Master Musician.  
It is He Who makes me sing.  
It is His song I will play  
If I keep myself clean  
Free of dust and grime,  
So that every ear may hear  
His song and His notes  
Through my voice.

What am I but a flute?

Sophia White

## **What Is A Gift Worth?**

What is a gift worth  
If it remains unwrapped?  
What thanks are due to the giver  
What delight is due to the recipient?  
None, as far as I can tell.  
What is a gift worth  
If it is neglected and forgotten?  
How can it be used or admired  
How can its price be justified?  
It cannot, and that is plain to see.  
What is a gift worth  
If it is forsaken for other paths?  
Will it rot away or rust over  
Will it linger hopefully, fade into nothing  
  
Or will it explode?

Sophia White

## What Is Not

I once lived in an old brown wood  
Where everything went just as it should  
And my feet were grounded square  
Among the sensible folk living there  
In that no-nonsense, practical wood  
A wood oft dark, a wood oft fair,  
A wood known as "What Is."

But every night, beneath the stars,  
I'd leave the town and walk far  
Into the dark and columned trees,  
Rising up in twos and threes,  
No one saw me thence depart  
Beneath the stilled starry seas,  
And no one knew I wandered.

I knew my way well and sure  
So often had I walked before  
The path slender as a thread  
By none but me could it be read  
Me, who had heard the water's lure,  
The lure of a pool to which I tread,  
A pool none else in this wood knew.

My eyes beheld it every night  
A pure and holy, blessed sight  
A pool as still as the sky above  
A pool as good as first, true love.  
Reflecting heaven's diamond lights  
And all the other lights thereof,  
A starlit pool, my heart's delight.

The pool's name: "What Is Not."  
It held all I'd ever sought,  
All that the wood could not know  
The places reality couldn't go.  
Dissatisfied with realism's lot,  
I'd look into the depths below  
And take one precious sip.

Ambrosia! Elysium's own!  
Like the liquid, molten tone  
Of celestial silver bells!  
What worlds hid in its swell!  
It coursed through blood, flesh, and bone,  
In one eternal, fleeting knell  
And I wept when it was done.

I dared not sup the water twice  
Once a night must lone suffice  
For I still lived in What Is wood  
Where starlit pools are not good

And What Is Not's sweet entice  
Lured me where I never should  
Have let my wanderlust rove.

But still I ventured back again  
Through the stale and stark terrain  
To sip the silver waters there,  
That mystic and mysterious lair  
That had before stolen men  
From pale and worn reality's care  
And locked them in its depths.

Oh, how I played with courting fire!  
The inevitable did indeed transpire.  
One night, one sip just couldn't sate  
The thirst I had in my palate.  
I tread too thin and weak a wire  
And tumbled off into that mire  
That mire of What Is Not.

And now I haunt those wondrous deeps  
All the magic is mine to keep  
The silver stars weave through my hair  
And all is good and all is fair  
And when the nights are inken deep  
I rise to breathe the stagnant air  
Of that old, dull wood, What Is.

Sophia White

## When Words Fail

I once thought words held everything,  
Each dream and thought and sight.  
They could express the heart and soul  
Make the leaden spirit take flight.  
I thought that every feeling inside  
Could be released by a single sound,  
But then I met someone – you  
And words crashed to the ground.  
No word could show just how I feel  
When our eyes meet one another  
Or how your voice can lift my heart  
Make it dance like no other.  
No phrase or sentence could rightly express  
The joy that springs to life  
When you glance my way – Oh! How  
Your gaze cuts like a knife.  
No word is nearly quite sufficient  
To explain the rapturous times  
Your hand, by fault or accident,  
Lightly brushes mine.  
I've written verse, book, and song,  
With words varied and grand,  
But never come across one for you  
In any time or land.  
And so I've never told you  
What I feel inside,  
And till I find words to suffice  
My love I'll softly hide.

Sophia White

## **When You Are With Me**

The sun comes after the rain  
And the lost come home again  
The seasons each tarry a while  
Bringing shares of tears and smiles  
All is well, all is well,  
All is as it should always be  
When you are with me.

The night is silver, the day gold,  
The flowers young, the forest old,  
Every new day is a puzzle to solve,  
Old wounds heal and enemies absolve.  
This is the world, this is the world,  
As perfect as 'twas meant to be  
When you are with me.

Dreams come true, and wishes too,  
Hopes are many and sorrows few.  
My steps are light and debonair,  
In step with the melody in the air.  
Lovely is life, so lovely is life,  
It's better than I thought it would be,  
When you are with me.

Sophia White

## Where Are You?

I'm befuddled: Where are you?  
I've not the faintest, vague-est clue.  
I haven't looked; perhaps I'd best.  
But I'd much rather leave that quest  
And sit instead, and in my head,  
Think of it from 'pon my bed.  
Maybe you're at the store; maybe lying on the floor?  
Or in a tree? In the sea?  
Or sipping wine in a winery?  
Are you walking 'round on stilts?  
Watering flowers so they won't wilt?  
Catching fairies with a bowl of cream?  
Or far off following your wildest dream?  
Are you really nowhere at all  
Or everywhere? It is you call.  
I do know this: (and this is true)  
I know where NOT to find you  
Right here in this plain white chair  
I know THAT 'coz I'm sitting there.

Sophia White

## **Won't You Help?**

The world is so big  
I'd like to discover  
Every stitch there is  
To uncover.  
But I am so small  
The world is so grand  
I fear I shall never  
Take it in hand.  
Will you come along  
And help me, dear?  
Two is twice as one.  
And there's so much here  
To see and find and do.  
You'll help me, dear,  
Won't you?

Sophia White

## **Words**

Words, words, words.  
So many, many words.  
So many words.  
So many worlds.  
So many words that lead to worlds.  
If only I could find the code  
That would unlock those words.  
I might find what I seek  
In those hidden worlds  
That hide behind the words.

Sophia White

## **Wouldn't You Agree?**

Tuesday, a good day.  
I love Tuesdays - my favorite day.

Wednesday, okay day.  
Not the best, but livable.

Thursday, pretty good.  
I can do weekly Thursdays.

Fridays, the harbinger  
Of the weekend. Love Fridays.

Saturday, you sleep late.  
I'll take a month of Saturdays.

Sunday, afternoon naps.  
Yeah, I can handle Sundays.

Monday is an insult to the calendar.

Sophia White

## **Wretched Day**

All wound up in its own cloak of misery  
Rain weeping out of every pore  
How this day has utterly drained and dampened me  
Left me like an old boot washed ashore.

The sun has fled in cowardice from the sky  
Afraid of the clouds, hanging damply in the air.  
The earth is wet, so wet it shall never turn dry,  
And the trees, like shorn sheep, are stark and bare.

The sidewalk is littered with leaves in dull decay  
That leave no friendly crunch beneath the heel.  
No, they've not but a sodden squelch to say  
As in their dying throes they wither and peel.

This wretched day is a dark, cold, dampish breeze  
Blown in from some far off swampish parts  
That slithers down your coat and up your sleeve  
And down your throat and all about your heart.

Sophia White

## **You Chose to Play**

You had it all from first to last  
You won it all when the dice were cast  
You held the whole world in your palm  
Your stars were lucky, your sea was calm.

You could have been anything at all  
Your potential stood a mile tall  
Your mind was strong, your talents great  
Your wits the equal of any potentate.

But you chose to play, boy,  
You chose to play.  
You threw all the world away  
And chose to play.

You once stood a mile high  
You were one heck of a guy  
Your life screamed success so loud  
None had more cause to be proud.

But you chose to play, boy,  
You chose to play.  
You threw all the world away  
And chose to play.

Sophia White

## **You Inspire Me**

You inspire me.  
You drive me to my paints, my brushes  
Into wild mad rages with the canvas  
Splattering red passion against yellow bliss  
A clean blue wash over all  
Stars of gold, for I could walk among them  
Pale blue moon, for the beautiful evenings  
Ochre sun which burns so brightly and yet  
Never seems to die  
Until finally the colors all run together  
Into a coffeeshop brown, a pleasant hue  
Neither color nor shade, but in-between  
Balancing passion and rest  
Desire and contentment.

You make my hands itch for a pen  
As if I could inscribe what I am feeling  
But my heart is too full for words  
It overflows into my mind, floods it  
Drives out reason, banishes doubt  
Yet I try to write, to explain, to describe  
My words make puddles on the page  
Worthless really, but fun to splash in  
I can only laugh at my desperation  
My feeble attempts at eloquence  
And the way the words run together like the rain  
Which runs down the window beside me  
Making the world wet like tears on the cheek  
But I am not crying, only writing  
My heart.

You inspire such wild, inexpressible creativity in me  
The urge to form a new world with my hands  
To create mountains and seas for you  
To paint a portrait of what is in my thoughts  
To make an epic of a moment we shared  
This I cannot do, because my love for you  
Is too much, too much, too much for art.  
What then, shall I do? I fail in every attempt  
To give you a gift adequate for my love  
Know this, then, I can only give you what  
Is greatest in my possession:  
Every moment of my life until I die.

Sophia White

## **You'll Never Go Solo**

Your road is set before you, a road that's paved in stone  
Stone from distant planets of galaxies unknown  
It's lined with trees and columns, all woven tight with vines  
That cast across your future shades of tangles lines.

You step with steps uncertain of destiny or goal  
You see only a fragment when you want to see the whole.  
The road cuts misty valleys and darkened mountain heights  
And is lit by daylight only to be turned to night.

It seems you'll never make it, or at least not in good time,  
For the corners, they are dark, leading to uncertain climes.  
You'll look back, and often, at what you've left behind  
And wish for where you've been, when days were silver-lined.

But traveler, don't despair of twisting, clouded roads,  
You'll never go it solo, you'll never walk alone.  
I will walk beside you, for as long as I may,  
Through sorrow-riddled nightmares, through wild joyous days.

And if or when I cannot share your road of foreign stone,  
You'll still not go solo, you'll never walk alone.  
Another will step with you, another hand in yours,  
For as long as you'll be walking you'll walk in threes and fours.

And even when their footsteps and mine all fade away,  
And no hand is grasping yours down the narrow way,  
There'll always be a Someone whose steps will match your own,  
You'll never go on solo, you'll never walk alone.

Sophia White

## **Za'anaia, Warrior Queen**

Za'anaia, Warrior Queen,  
Raised by the blood of enemy kings  
Rode to war on a shaihawk's wings  
To slay her forsworn foe.

Za'anaia held a spear  
Forged by smiths from Jha'daaier  
The men all fell dumb with fear  
Before Za'anaia's feet.

Za'anaia struck her blow  
To enemies marching far below  
Her hawk as white as fallen snow  
His eyes a crimson blaze.

Za'anaia saw the one  
She'd sworn to slay by moon or sun  
Her foe saw her and began to run  
But the hawk fell from the sky.

Za'anaia won her fight  
Before the day succumbed to night  
The enemy had no chance for flight  
When Za'anaia rode to war.

Za'anaia, Warrior Queen,  
Raised by the blood of enemy kings  
Rode to war on a shaihawk's wings  
And slew her forsworn foe!

Sophia White