

Poetry Series

# Clarence Day

## - poems -

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# Clarence Day((-))

# The Nameless One

Roll forth, my song, like the rushing river,  
That sweeps along to the mighty sea;  
God will inspire me while I deliver  
My soul of thee!

Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening  
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,  
That once there was one whose veins ran lightning  
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour,  
How shone for him, through his griefs and gloom,  
No star of all heaven sends to light our  
Path to the tomb.

Roll on, my song, and to after ages  
Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,  
He would have taught men, from wisdom's pages,  
The way to live.

And tell how trampled, derided, hated,  
And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,  
He fled for shelter to God, who mated  
His soul with song.

With song which alway, sublime or vapid,  
Flow'd like a rill in the morning beam,  
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid  
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemn'd for years long  
To herd with demons from hell beneath,  
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears, long  
For even death.

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted,  
Betray'd in friendship, befool'd in love,  
With spirit shipwreck'd, and young hopes blasted,  
He still, still strove;

Till, spent with toil, dreeing death for others  
    (And some whose hands should have wrought for him,  
If children live not for sires and mothers),  
    His mind grew dim;

And he fell far through that pit abysmal,  
The gulf and grave of Maginn and Burns,  
And pawn'd his soul for the devil's dismal  
Stock of returns.

But yet redeem'd it in days of darkness,  
And shapes and signs of the final wrath,  
When death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,  
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,  
And want, and sickness, and houseless nights,  
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,  
That no ray lights.

And lives he still, then? Yes! Old and hoary  
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,  
He lives, enduring what future story  
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,  
Deep in your bosoms: there let him dwell!  
He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble,  
Here and in hell.

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