

Poetry Series

**Nellie Isabelle Steward
Cooper
- poems -**

Publication Date:
2020

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

**Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper(4 September 1915 -
14 April 2005)**

A Boa Strikes Samoa

Bright as disaster
The morning sky
Above a burnished sea

Leans close

As though to devour
Not just one
But all-

Holds still-
For one small signal waiting

To spread its length, slip down
The rope of day

And crush
The soft-delicate,
Bones of earth

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Brightness So Real

Bright flowers
Some our hands must pick
these flowers so rare and bright

That grow on the chasms brink
Our stumbling feet must
find a way- not tomorrow
but today

No matter what you think
No matter what you say
while living day to day

For some tis true will never stray
But for some you know
it's oh so goooood to stray

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Change Of Heart

The heart is colder still
To see the pear blossoms
Falling mixed with snow

Swirling in blizzard
Down the frozen path

Thick clouds in sky that
Never heard of spring

Yesterday sunny, windless, unclouded
Lends itself to meandering, □
With tender soft breezes

Today brings thoughts of
A change of heart
In the heart of spring

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Face Of Quaint Reality

So many birds twittering outside my little window, chirping,
chortling, and hop, hop hopping about

All eating, eating, eating with great gusto, bread crumbs, tidbits and things
hop, hop, hopping, heads a kilter to one side

My cardinal here too with fine orange beak,
just a smidgen of fresh blood to enliven his pose
his little black mask having slipped just a trifle
generously displaying a splendid proud crest

All fine birds clustered about on my little stoop and here on my grounds
such fine little faces, that gather and confer, gather and confer
such fine little faces, oh so many fine little faces

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Fairy Tale

Her own dying
Was but a Fairy tail
That she invented
From the other side of the mirror

She watched it happening
And put herself in role
of spectator who

Must impress on memory

All-
so as to make
the morning
paper

Choose the important
craft and hew the line
arrange the trivial
and important

So - they might mingle ever so nicely

Of course it was and would only be
but a fairy tale- by me

You see

What else could it possibly be?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Gathering Of Empty Coffee Cups

We are now down to the ends of things!
My dwindling and steadfast compatriots
Maybe it is now we know
What we had had?

We taste it now more lavishly!
Tis true - tis true

Is there not much else to do?

And if our cups run empty
Just a little tad sooner
What of it!

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Mocking Bird Is Singing

Oh mocking bird in the
dark cedar singing...

The day came on
And the day departed
You sing by the light
That has passed away...

In the dark of the cedar tree
Remember the day and the hour
That seemed forever
But passed

And one star shines for now
And one star now to wish upon

Keep singing, oh mocking bird
I am listening, ... I am listening
I am listening in my heart

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Mysterious Nowhere

Do we see reality maybe in glimpses?
just as we see people in passing
coming out of some jaunty somewhere
emerging to our curious view

Oh, but for a misting moment
then once again, gone-abruptly
lost in deep fog-back to
a mysterious nowhere

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A New Start

If everything is over
It only means
This is your new start!

Somewhere over the next hill
bend in the road, or right here
where your feet have stopped

But for a brief respite
you couldn't go any further

Time now for a few breaths
as you couldn't
take them then

Now take ten
and begin again

From a dismal nowhere
you may go anywhere

All directions
up, down, across, round and round

No impediments nor restrictions are here
starting from now
is the most important thing...
enjoy, love, have fun...

A hand up I'll be glad to give you
we'll share together our rising sun

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Rose For Us (To Yeats)

You cannot know
For you will be dead
When the fleeting hint
Of perfume's shed
□
And the petals fall
And your hand is ice
And your lips are stone:
You do not go to your grave alone

And where is the scent
Of the roses going?

It has fled to somebody's head
To blood streams□
And knowing

Something besides flowers and tears, you know
This fixed stance gets.....no more can you grow

To add some final flourish
To beg some grace,
To heal some wound,
To say
Anything you did not say before

There is no more
Into the wind you will be going

And blind in the sun, and blowing
And what the world knows
You will leave to their knowing.....

Though it be a lie down to the last crowing....

Except..... there is a faint something
In somebody's heart, when they hear your name
A something for somebody
That will not be the same

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Silent Goodbye

Some goodbyes may be said
In the heart and alone
Long before the final hour

For at the time of our departing
We being neither here nor there
May have no time to comfort
Nor share a parting prayer

God bless

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

A Yellow Dress For Sale

A yellow dress for sale
Worn only twice
As good as new
At a very low price

I bought the yellow dress
With such a happy heart
I Didn't see then

How my true love

And I could ever part

I wore the yellow dress
with a white rose
in my hair

His eyes were everywhere
But not on me....you see

I lent the yellow dress
To my friend to wear
I helped to pin a white rose
In her brown dark hair

His eyes did stray
Not a time my way

Not a word or glance
Between us two
He danced with her
that long night through

A yellow dress for sale

I saw his love begin
In a quickened glance
And her heart was his
Before their second dance

And in the fall his bride
she'll surely be
And a bridesmaid I
Who his wife should truly be

How can the heart
Such anguish hold
When hope is dead
and love grows cold
And proud lips must
Their smiles arrange

Through bitter tears
Is the world
So lost and strange

A yellow dress for sale
Worn only twice
As good as new
At a very low price

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Aeons Past

Silence draws a distant cadence:

Clear grows

A murmuring waterfall

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

After Taste

She went to gather
Fruit from the wildplum tree
that was uphill and hidden from the house

She was not wont to go there
When it was blossoming though

Something too disturbing in the
air- treacherous to her.....
But It was to make jelly that she climbed

So far, stopping on the steep
hillside at times to listen
For what was not there,
and feel what was vanished

She came to visit the dead-
as she gathered the ripe plums,
Not silent with the ghost
that was always there

Nor he with her....

Eating as he was each time
with such gusto
Such running rhapsodies,

Such eye-closing expressions,
as hint at secret worlds of savoring...
Nothing, nothing for him
surpassing this harvest,

And nothing for her surpassing
his keenness...

Always the final turning to her

He with faint wonder
□And doubt

'How can you not like them? '

It was because she has not yet
acquired a taste for bitterness she said.....

Her head lay now a moment in the curve of his arm
Like the pressure of living, flesh against her shoulder

The plums hung heavy on her downhilljorney
Moving into shadow, careful of rocks
on the weed-entangled path

Finally are
..... the plums
Safe now in the familiar kitchen:
And safe tomorrow in tomorrow's..... jars enclosed

-
-
-

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Aftermath

No wind disturbs

The forest clearing

The sun warmed stone sleeps

alone

No bird calls

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

All You Need To Learn

Is to be quiet inside and out
Do not think
Do not remember
And soon it will all be over

Life has tiny knives that may finally
Shred all hearts to pieces

Roll the shreds carefully
In salt to preserve them
Put on a dark shelf in the closet

How could anyone walk
The highways of this world
With a heart in their chest

If indeed you are stubborn
And refuse to die
Then you should know that
The task before you is not easy

To make a thinking creature
Into an unthinking creature

To push the mighty oak
Back into the acorn:

Are you stubborn still

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Alone With A Dream

From a really true dream
wings are grown
And the dream it will
fly

But the second hand dream
With its engineered wings
Is destined
to die

Hand crafted dreams they will not fly-

As the built wing-
(by skill of suchlogic)
is fated to die

But nature builds truer
bymysterious plan
And rules for us grandly
far more than we can

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

An End Steadfastly Approaches

The sun descends as though it bade farewell
The night comes on - How dark? - How close!
Heat lightning rims the black far
mountains as we pause, blackening our path!
No flickering fireflies fly up like sparks tonight

They are gone away with the quicksilver salamanders

We walk to the sound
of foot steps on gravel
In the empty air wordless and unknowing
No peeper peeps - nor breeze blows
Nothing astray in the wet grass alas
Nothing tells us except the fireflies and the salamander
There will be no stars again for us
No moon and no tomorrow

The brook that ran laughingly
In the summer meadow
Will not again flash
Nor the salamander dart
In the sunlight to it's crevice
Nor the fiery heart
Hid in the opal
Suddenly appear
Nor your smile cleave the dusk

Thus our final walk together

And beyond nothing- nothing beyond at all

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

An Ever Expanding Universe

Pesky particles
quaint quarks

And atoms all aglow

Sleeves dipped
in coffee, eyes aglaze

Cosmic dust
endless maze

Accelerate time
diminish space

A zillion years
left no trace

And life goes on

Allons!

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Banquet For A Kill Joy

Yearnings unexplored
By dint of habit
Can become such cruel entrapment

To struggle from this abyss?

You may redirect your fate
And of the problem state:

To vagueness give face,
To age, measure and name...
Count on your five or so senses

As it so seems

Else be content-with it
To be a mole that dreams-mole dreams

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Before The First Kiss

Heaven may not be connected
to this star and survival may
not be equated to
an on-goingness

Love prepares to leave before
the first kiss..

The prince of darkness is the sun
he has not known
what I have known

It would be to him impossible
that freedom could consist
of bondage,

That the only
song was silence.....

That the will could be

Feeble in it's own folly,
And doomed

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Beginning Today

Be it a velvet gown
Be it a laughing clown
Be it a castle tall
Anything at all
Will begin a dream today

And the dream
May last and last
And the dream you dream today
Will slay the mighty past

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Beseeching Your Grand Arrival

Come in as bright blue sky

As breaks forth from
eternal dawn

shine- melt-

Splash over the harsh rimmed edge
flow into this dark and desolate heart

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Beyond The Next Twist

Of course we have the hope
That beyond the next twist
Of the road- there will be suddenly
Some undreamed of violent and definite
Sensation that will slay us where we stand

So that we die happy
Grasping now in our certain hand
Some complete knowledge never before accessible

It is the expectation that does us in though;
The fine tuning of the nerves
The oblique slant of the breath, the reaching
Towards something not there....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Beyond The Province Of The Mind

Beyond the province of the mind
branches twist and forever clutch
thin grey witch tresses we seek and find

Dry leaves to crumble-with the crumbling shrouds -
and under the tree roots still mud brown
hidden places too- where their gods went down

There in the rivers flowing
dim in the light a strange knowing
some thread that answers to waters going
and the tangled ghosts in the winds blowing

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Body Of Evidence

It is the body
That remembers with no strain:
it hardly does to trust
the brain-poor thing

Which fails when wanted

All it's vaunted cunning can't bring forth
An ancient rose: the body's silken network caught
It's fragrance easily

And even holds
The melody that never passed-
the notes or hearing

Somewhere runs on
endless song - with winds like fingers playing

In some unlikely place
Beyond the brains imaging
Between the spaces
Of the stars perhaps

Where two and two
Add not- to this or that

Some strange assertive
Of the blood permits such
Grand and mysterious heresy

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Bondage Or Freedom

The safety of uncaringness

The encrypted loneliness
The circumscribed movements
All within the known arena

The small perfections
Exacted as a ritual

The votive offerings
Of cakes and ale
So lavishly enjoyed

The obscure tenderness
That make the fingertips
Follow the shape of things

It twas a sort
Of frozen love

Not what she
Would have chosen
Had life been kind

But many more than one
Know but one freedom:

Bondage!

Or she be free to choose:
This was the freedom of bondage

Whose flavor is regret

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Cafeteria

I will go early
And feast on doughnuts
(The kind with the jelly in the middle)

Drink huge cups of coffee
And listen

The swirl of voices pleases me

The cadence, growing
Lost then found, the
Murmuring catch
Of sound, the lull,

The plaint of meaning, the
Thread of melody.....

Obscure and haunting
As distant
Water, falling..

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

California Seashore

I came to the edge of the land
And there lay the sea as a prostrate giant

Crawling along an endless sand

Far distant across her back
Ringlets of white hair dancing

As alternately upon her knees
She rose braced herself

Then fell again headlong
All diffused and scattered

As nothing under the blank blue sky
Forever constant - waiting mattered

Once again upon her knees-now collapsing

Hair flung over her face and burning
In curlettes rolling up the endless strand
An eternal expanse of washing sand

Thus she as giant forever expressing
falling and rising-falling and rising
through infinite eons the shore caressing

Should gain inch by inch hour by hour
Her place against far distant cliffs
This place marked out for her to die

Beneath the blank blue waiting sky

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Can You Turn?

Can you turn from the sword
that invites-please
'Hang upon me? '

Or shrink back from the
boasting pool that whispers
'Jump'

But I am afraid of blood which
makes me sick
Scalding water on tender skin-

It is terrible, terrible, terrible

Faith is useless here:
I tell you this, it is no illusion

The blood is real and so is the bubbling water

Look carefully:
Behind the road you trod;
Cubbed out

Do you believe me?
Look at me!

'Speaking'

But you couldn't... trees they
Were too thick.. they went by
Chanting, chanting, chanting:
It's fine It's fine It's fine
Jump in, jump in, jump in -

But I'm already -splashing, splashing, splashing

Must I beat my way to the riverbank
to prove I'm wet

Outrage danced on my lips, that
Sputtered and danced

Can You Turn?

And around the bend came the
Voices fainter and fainter
'the water - the water - the water
So fine
Jump in- jump in - jump in-

And no more I was free! !
I dipped my hand in the water
And the drops ran out of
My fingers - the sun lit
Up to my throat-

What a wonderful, wonderful day
for knowing I thought

'What a wonderful, wonderful place for swimming'

I murmured
And it was true: the water
Was cream and silk

The sky was bright as disaster
Suppose they came back?
Suppose they came back!
Was the mutter that crinkled the
Edges of being

But the water smoothed in
Over the sunshine

'False friends''Deceitful loves'
Who has not known these
The world over?

Does it then blot out the sun! ? !
And dry up the river?

Can You Turn?

Jump in, my dear, my dears
my dears-

The water is fine, it's fine, it's
fine
The water- the water- the water

The whisper is treading water
with no body
and not convinced -
But I will learn
I will Learn.... I will learn

Some day I may lead the
chanters myself

Yes it's well to have marching
feet and banners
Even with this

'The water is fine, jump in, '
they cried

Its fine, its fine, its fine
jump in- jump in- jump in

'But I'm already in, 'I screamed
can't you see, can't you see,
can't you see? '

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Car Crash

I did nothing special
On the day
They put the two youngsters
In their graves
He in his, she in hers

A pang for the father
Who was deprived of the son he knew
(Or did not know) for nineteen years.....

The mother mourning
Her only daughter delicate and shy
Who smiled seldom

And dreamed much.....

Not being able to think past
Horror to see what was left.....

□

but over and over

Of the smashed car

Walking off forever
Weaponless against death

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Choosing

All that exists is worthy of love
For all that exist is life
And life is worthy of love
If it be worthy of anything

But in love you do not choose,
ask for credentials or measure distances

To choose one thing among many is to reject more
than you choose

□

You must pity the poor connoisseur
who must weigh and measure, beauty
by the pound and the line
and the color

While life like quicksilver
runs out through their fingers:

Heart if you will listen
I can assure you that this is not the way
of the lover...

To love is not to choose;
art objects are chosen
furnishings for the house
as are appointments for the table,

such exotics gathered by rejection have not love but only an obscure
and ephemeral affection

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Concert

There netted from the deep
dream - charmed
ocean

The sunken garden
Where the dry leaves
Scuttle before
The west wind

The spread sunshine on the
Bench by the far wall

The rose blooming
In December
By your left shoulder

The concert now over
The harpsichord folds down

The recorder tenderly
Tucked in its quarters

All the golden notes somewhere
Still in the webbed lace
Of tinkling strings sounding:

Reflections ride on the curved
Melody rising and
Burst bubbles answer

The eyes awakening
Dispersed again into nothingness

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Consider This

There is no use to consider
The color of pain
Of any use,
Yes to look at the jib of the cut
And the swelling blood-drops

And feel the edge of the cut
And the warm stickiness
And the body-faintness

Yes-and to consider antiseptics

Perhaps and bandages
And dwell a little on how
With such a wound

One can live-around
About on the edges of it
till it heals:

These things are healing in
themselves to think of

But to consider the color
of the pain
The stance of the wounder
and the act of wounding

To dwell in the hurt like an
animal condemned

This is a grave sickness that
forms to the death

Like abuse unattended:
What does it matter to you if
the knife was

Concealed or open or if you were

laid low by friend or enemy?

Or the details, time, place, songs
playing, special- nuances?

Scream, whimper, swear
if you must

At the wound, though
Always at the wound

Never the wounder or
the wounding

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Crying

My heart is crying.....
Let it cry

I'm desolate.....
All, aren't we all

What shall I do-
Who knows?

Shall I pray to the gods?
The Gods are dead!

Ouch!

You stepped on my toe
Wanta make something of it?

God-dammed right!

What am I doing
Lying here

On the floor
Again-

A good place to rest..for short spell
Appreciate this respite..

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Dandelion

Think you the dandelion have thoughts of self improvement?
tries perhaps to be more like the peonies
dreams of just once being in the flower show
and dazzling all who go

Winning plaudits and admiring oh's
putting to shame the rose - who knows?

During the winter one dandelion in the grass and the heart swells
some secret there is in this we think mysterious-
can we somehow know this elusive impetus?

What whispered stand out -be different
grow not in your proper time but now!

What said fear you winter
that it would slay you?
know not what awaits you
on the crowd pitiless Spring lawn!

How could one dandelion
in its head weigh pro and con
and in its bravery decide its own bloom time and death
to do away with dreamsto stand alone - to grow

Did something inside push it?
saying in many there is one
draw by your singleness -
be the whole show -
stop the eye - be proud and doomed

All manner of thoughts in that gold head - who knows?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Darkside Of The Moon

I held the light in my heart
Even as in the long cold dark night
One holds the reflection of the
Sun unrisen

Knowing as seeds
In their earth-covered winter
Know the promise implicit in their waiting:
I held the light that was not yet
But would be, and waited.....

But the sun does not rise,
And winter comes not

forth to Spring

And slow and dim
Something within me
gropes.....

Seeking a lesson still not learned
Whose strangeness is too terrible to know?

Something of cycles in which
The sun is not

And modes of being in which
The cold and dark are all

□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Different

We are
Sharply different
Each from each
Something within us insists

But the hand does not stop reaching
for the pepper mill the same

We are the same-

The same at bottom convinced

As are the
Cattle that come
To the salt
lick

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Do You Still Recognize Me?

Recognize "qualms" as the
beginning of future torments
From some feared watchdog of the soul
An insistence that besets, that disorients

That rives away the ego
And finally forsakes its pathway

Plunging aside into the dark forests of the soul
Never is this "a sleep and forgetting"
But an awakening that blasts
Into many pieces, that forever after
Are only drifting dust, with no place to settle

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Drifting Clouds

And then I heard the rapturous
calling of a God's name

I grew rapt and stilled
waiting for a vision to be

And beneath my vision
So constant-so true

I made a God as mortals do

Tender as so seemed
the tender grace of the God I knew

Through endless time to reach such place
awe to behold the glorious face

Drifting clouds of dusty lace
forever lay across enshrouded face

Where lace thinned out
and soft winds blew

I grew sheltered, stood sky tall

And gazing beneath the lace that hid fair face
revealed to me was no face at all

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Driven

It does not matter
How I have been driven
What gauntlet took up
What gauntlet threw down

I Found little birds in hiding
I found rain slick pavements-
Sodden bushes

Winds tormenting the eaves
Teasing inside!

I found webs

Silence in sun

Chasms too wide
Mountains too high

I have walked past forever
And morn's not given

Hankering and hungering after the moon
I settle now for a lonelier heaven

And sink to surety at last

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Earl Of Essex Versus Queen Elizabeth

My keen sword lies broken at your feet,
Cold eyes and hot eyes above it meet...
Your will is to rule,
And mine not to be ruled...
Tis such a royal pity

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Elsewhere

I could not say that this
Is the end of everything

Could I?

That this moment was the pivot
Upon which the world turned
And I, from it thrown outward

Forever

To alien and unconquerable worlds beyond
Cold in the steady brilliance of stars I have forgotten

Yet for it I loved you more

That in my tentative perplexed guessing
I found a stone wall, and no answers

As though you were steeling yourself with me
To be stalwart in disaster and mute in crisis
Defining limits that gave no hope

But within whose confinement
We must still be
And ache with awareness

Nor to lay on each other any push
To arrange, disperse, comfort or seek

Any way out

Two souls together who will never in any despair
Of mind
Lie quiet again on the green hillside

And turn with the sun

Hope never so freely given me as you gave it

Now the firm shut door

The plaintive reply-'this way is closed'
Go elsewhere

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

End Of A Dream

Dream.....

End of a dream.....

Where do you stand

At the end of

A dream..

All is behind; 'round in your

head

Splinters of sound, words that

were said;

Broken like toys, days that were

planned

Gone into mist, sunk into sand

There's no place to stand

At the end of a dream.....

End.....

End of a dream.....

□

Where do you go

□

At the end of a dream.....

Where is another way

where on this earth

Some thing of value

some thing of worth

A burned over land

Blackened by fire

No eager glee now

No hearts desire.....

END OF A DREAM

There's no place to go

At the end of a dream.....

End.....

End of a dream.....

What do you do

□

At the end of a dream....

Nothings ahead now.....

Something like lead

Lies where your heart lay:

Something is dead.....

An empty glass.....to turn in

the hand

Wine is no more now,

you can't understand.....

There's nothing to do

At the end of a dream.....

Dream.....

End of a dream.....

What do you learn

At the end of a dream.....

There's some little glow; more

than you know

Something that someday will

burst into flame

Flame into joy.....

you'll understand

Green trees will grow again on

burnt-over land.....

END OF A DREAM

There's something to learn

At the of a dream....

End of a dream....

End of a dream.....

There's something to learn

□

EROM

The End Of A Dream.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Entertaining A Fool

When someone seeks to fool you
Sedulously striving so as to rule you

Thus professing so sincere
Even to make tear drops appear
Tis so fortunate he is near

To assuage a troubled soul of fear

Which is you in dire distress
That he may comfort and caress

Fabricating mysterious machinations
Boasting exaggerated proclamations
Expressing exhilarating fascinations

All with bluster and aplomb
His magic flatulence goes on and on

Professing devotion to this or that
An allegiance or two-so lightly sprinkled in

Who seeks to be but devoted friend

Add just a pinch of abhorrence and disdain
For those bad-bad people he cannot explain

Let him continue on and on
Til all his bloated wind is gone
He will never have to know
How he entertains and amuses so!

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Faces

We scarcely pause to speculate
what throngs behind a face

What multitudes of worlds there be
that cram that tiny space

How painful for a heart to beat
that cannot find its place

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Falling

On the edge of sleep
On the falling words
Of an old song

On the edge of yesterday
On a falling vision
Of a distant past

Your face grows
Out of the mist

Hello you say and I
Unfold the bright ribbon

Of surprise

Look in your eyes
And fall into the
Dream that never ends

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Floored

When you are floored
By a harsh blow
It's best to lie there
For the full count
(What ever the full count is for you)

And not spring up at once
And not start pummeling frantically
with blind unfocused abandon

Remembering this:

While I was lying there I thought
Maybe that's why the pugnacious
Are dealt with accordingly

During this little pause for reflection
Maybe they may come to see

A certain valor In prudence and assessment - after all

So while I'm lying here (again)
I try to think how long
A minute actually is - (it can be quite long sometimes- believe me)

And how much needed, thinking time
The Gods withkind and gracious understanding

Have once again bestowed on me

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

For Heavens Sake

To try or not to try, to gain entrance,
be ushered in, with, beneficent angelic smile...

Heaven what will it be, for me? ...

Tis heaven here on this earth, or maybe elsewhere, far-far distant? ..

Away, away, away, beyond a grand expanse

What does it cost us to dream it, consider, contemplate..

Heaven a delightful state in which the whole soul and life is enthralled, casting
out all else, being but divine euphoric enrapture, forever? ..

To imagine heaven, be it this or that, near or far,
but why not imagine?

Imagine, imagine, imagine as you please..

Are heavens rewards reserved just for those who have fulfilled?
Or perchance we may wander, stray or stumble into heavens of our own

Perhaps there are small heavens graciously disbursed about us, here and there,
our heavens, that we may delight in now, at this very moment..

If we are to imagine, why not imagine things of heaven?

For heavens sake...

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Forever

I wished in the most dreadful way
That we could know
each other forever

I did not know then
how long forever is

Now I would wish
if I could still wish

To know you only a month,
a week, an hour

Or just the one moment
when our eyes met

There I would put a star

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Forever Lost Or Just Misplaced?

Not in a book on the shelf
nor in yourself look

Smoldering words
in the brain unwritten
Moldering words
in a drawer unsaid

Dimensions untold
Eager of the universe unfelt

But we turned back
Not yet ready to go
Into the secret garden
Where the gods
Dwell

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Friend

Friend- 'for we have not
yet been silent together'
The opposite of the little prince

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Future

The future is booby-trapped
By the past

We are self-rigged to destruction,
Having one implacable enemy
Whose face is hid:
All that we are we did

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Gifted

This pledge is not made
Of gold or base metal
So that if twisted broken or lost
Years-hence on some lonely
Hillside someone might pick it up

And in curious fingers
Turning it - say
'What was this? '

This pledge is made
Of a hearts dream given
On the raw edge
Of time with
Drums beating
You cannot take it
As more solemn
Than I am
Great nor forever

But only as you
May know
My heart to be
Whimsical

Inconsistent and fey
A heart
Such as does not fashion rings
Nor throw away
And needs no symbol
To bind it to the slow
Turning earth
And its own

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Go-Away

There are some days
That do not Go-Away
That somewhere in us
Live suspended
As though the
Pendulum in
Falling ceased to
fall one moment
And in some
lack of time is forever hid

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Grasping At Straws

As straw goes serenely floating by - grasp for it

This may slow a foreboding and precipitous descent
Into treacherous waters that do not relent

Through tumult and beguiling events swirling round n round
Your feet may settle safely to bottom ground
Finding not waters strewn with shards of broken glass
But pleasant eddies of constant compass

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Gypsy

Yes the Gypsy told me
At the edge of the darkening town:
Leave your tears a minute
Lay aside your frown
Two cups are still standing
Three have fallen down

You must cross the river,
the river, the river
You must cross the river
And leave your past behind
You must cross the river
On the first bridge you can find

Five cups were filled with hope
Then you were bereft

Three cups you know have fallen
But two you see are left

If you stand here weeping
The fourth cup will surely fall
Only one cup will be standing
Then no cups will stand at all

Yes the Gypsy told me
At the edge of a twilight town:

One cup in twilight standing
filled to over flow

So wait us here no longer
And forward we both shall go

To the center of this
twilight town

Where I shall
bestow on you

with great haste at
trumpets sound

My gift that shall astound:

A time of distant days
Will return again as then
Desolation reach an end
And new crown then begin

A kingdom lost now found
I hear the trumpets sound

□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Heart Beats

Are we pent
Vision less through
The heart beats;

Slow now, so slow
And yet you say
The dream must go

What sleeps in the veins
And robs the eyes of
Sight -
That into the dark cave
Must go
And never know the
Light?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Here's The Rub

Snow job?

Grand Illusions?

I rubbed with care,
And then looked in.....

Behold! no face looked back

I had polished myself into
the mirror
And alas was gone

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

He's Gone

Of course I kept on
Knowing him!
After he was dead...

What you have
Once known
You cannot unknow

Yet it seemed
That after a while
I knew him
In a different way

A more humane
More loving,

more

Forgiving, more
Seeing way

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Hidden

How to describe
the never thing
The never seen

The never known
Whose bones are
nevertheless in
you
As the bones of an
Unborn child

The never thing grows
us into a different
shape
Pushes us up
crooked
It is something you
can see:
People stop in the
street, whispering

Of course it is a
secret not to be
There explained
'My edges are not
the edges of myself
Hidden
They are the edges
of the never seen thing
Waiting to be born, '

When you are pregnant
in body
The veriest oaf on
the street corner
Knows what has
gone before:
But this is a never been
thing

Which has not seen
the light of day:
A never thing unlike
all others - not kin to
but a changing
The never thing heeds
neither
Pattern nor prophecy:
Who knows the period
of its gestation?

This world, ? the next, ?
a hundred worlds
from now
You are misshapen

mayhaps my dear
you are most shapely

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Hippy

When the flower children
failed
There was a sad vacancy
somewhere
With LUV gone where were we..

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Hold On!

Yesterday's ashes
Can't warm us here today
Tomorrow's light
However bright
Can't show anyone the way

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Hopeful

I cannot make amends
There is no way
I have searched my brain
And the by-ways of my soul
And there is
No answer

That this sorrow in time
May grow a pearl
Is my only hope:
And the pearl may be
Most beautiful

This muse
Shall now help me cope

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

How?

How can I give life to you
Whose secret heart I never knew?
The laments I drew
Were Scraps and seeming,
not
Verities; all dreaming (and)
False all I thought true

How with such
Bitter residue
In the dwindling few
Hours before dark
Construct a cameo
Of caring....?

Say
You loved-
you know not what

Certain and sure

True forever - that was not true

In truth.....

Braver than death
Stauncher than fate.....
But everything
Never or too late

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

I Let Go

I let a song go.... out of my heart...out of my heart....
I let a song go.....out of my heart... I let go..

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

I Must Ignore

Beneath the clutter of my days
Something moves

I must ignore
I must-not listen to

As the sad sailor
Told before of sirens,
Stirs his bark between
One ruin and another

Hopes once more to look upon
A sea more calm

Then billowing winds
To set him free

To such sun and air

Lists not to enchantment
Hung about- but bends his way
From all such promises
That would betray

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

In Leaving Clutter

Oh I would not have you clear me, so quickly
so quietly away - away -away! ! !

And into the trash bin throw
without even thinking or guessing
or seeking to know

Why? ?

What these trophies were
Or what woe betokened their collection
Not just rewards of negligence
Maybe something else - some vigilance
Against an implacable eternal foe?

Some badges here of abnegation or defiance
Spread - some solace here for sorrows
Some striving to be strong
Against temptation

Or despair

Some victories of the spirit alien to you but evident there

Not everything at once given away or thrown
away- away - away

But to be mused over - curious questions asked that never can be
Answered now - except by the heart that asks them here today

That asks WHY this, why HERE, its very special place
Why all this JUNK - JUNK - JUNK

Arranged so carefully and piled
So needlessly to fill
What vacancy - where did the heart err
that unexpectedly you find it there

Apparent and not obscure at all

to examine and perhaps compare
reflect, laugh, cry, grimace or swear

In chaos displayed with such majestic care

Stuff stacked and piled here and there and everywhere

With some fierce pride;
all that was found possible and not denied
now arranged carefully side by side

All affirmed against greatest of odds
through disapproving eyes
and disdainful nods

To you I would not leave
all that my life has been these many-many years

All clean, all neat and all so anonymous
with no fascination nor astonishment, to conceive

So lovingly now I leave
What I thought and was

A puzzle for some grey day

Tomorrow tis a splendid day
for such remembering - you say

You're right today's the day

To sweep me all- away, away, away! ! !

Isabelle Cooper

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

In Pursuit Of Freedom

If a mind! ! !

What mind? ? ?

(you whisper
a curious and plaintive plea)

that mind over there
just beyond the next horizon
of impending doom and despair

as it scuds blissfully thence-from here to there
without torturous-nagging doubt or lurking-calamity
burdened not with hideously frightening-expectation,
nor stricken with insufferable agony unrestrained

or hostage held by any of the
myriad of vicissitudes in being

ever constant-and ever sublimely unpleasant

But instead is graciously permitted
freedom-lavished total and unrestrained
and far too pleasantly abundant

will after a long while or a short bit

likely find itself stranded
and brought to idle-
in a most confining space
a perplexing and quite wearisome place

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Just Looking

When you look low enough
And high enough
Turn clear from the East to the West
And then from the West to the East
And then clear from the South to the North...
and back again..

and again-
Looking for a friend?

Stoop low enough to see
what's happening there
Stretch high enough to see
what's coming from where.....

Yawn -grandly while
casting furtive eye-and glance,
wink then peek
cautiously askance

Then maybe you have done
your daily dozen,
Or maybe you have done
your daily half-dozen:

Yes-yes all this -
just to avoid a far distant cousin

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Life Is A Tiger

Life is a tiger a terrible beast....

A terrible beast who will

Eat you up

He does not know... CHANEL

Perfume number five

From.....cow dung number 23,

For a Paris gown

From a breech cloth

At least he loves us all the same,

Whangles with no malice,

No elite are dressed

For his jaws, blood and flesh

Have the same sweet taste.....

He gnaws as savagely

On my arm as yours,

Eats both hearts

With the same gusto.

Turn up the music and make the

Red lips redder.... we shall walk

Down Broadway with

The tiger at our heels.

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Living Lavish

Be it a raindropp small
Be it a sunlit hall
Be it a waterfall
Be it a songbirds call
It's what we so live for
It's all the world and more

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Mamma's Reflection

I dust my cloth
Across the glass
I cannot see her
But she's there
I know

Her pale eyes

Watch me from
The mirror:
Her only window
Now

From the mirror
She watches
From the mirror
She looks

In the mirror
Trapped where you
Cannot see
In the mirror
Prismed
Another me-

The ghost
That haunts
The ghost
That weeps

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Meditating

Not a winged glance that
Slantwise sheds
Perfume in passing
And is gone

Not this

Direct, and suddenly full-on
Some thought looks
Briefly
To me but not at me

Something
Neither dead nor caged
Looks out somber
Not attentive but dispersed;
Listening
□
To give wonder to sustain me...
Someone is alive and well
And never to be
Thrown for a loss

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Monday Morning

So on this dulcet-mellifluous note we fall
headlong from majestic bemusement

Into sounds of clamoring confusement

Our dream leaves but a trace
of bewildering amusement

Blink once - blink twice -
then we begin to-
consider what living has thrown us into

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Morning Devotional

And the day devours me now
Eating from inside out:
And the clothes line holds the dreams
Of last night neatly hung

See the sunlight on the grass
That comes to the wall
And cannot pass

Hear the palm fronds rattle
Dry as the tongue
That cannot speak its grief

Last night's moon moved up the sky
Dissolved the night in loneliness and tears
And left the world an empty drear expanse

And one soul was there nestled
As at the bottom of a well

Dispassionately, with wrapped attention
Stir coffee in a cup
From inside out or outside in
Inexorably being all used up

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Morning Trees

When dreams evaporate and mist away
and hushed and still the shadows hang

As dew touched leaves in morning trees
you must bring forth the soul of it

Under wide sky, at first glance
be not sick in sleep another night

Pass by such sickness into life
in the ground now given you

As the first furrow of forgetting
seeds a love in dazzling splendor

So hard to bring forth
so easy does it mist away

Tis so delicate to raise

Will it's fresh green growth
be safe in uncertain earth?

Maybe fall there in the deep
dark pocket of the heart?

Where all ferments to bitterness and despair!

Better no heart to have at all
than so bitter a heart as this?

Who knows, who knows, who knows

Who knows...? ? ? ?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

My Falcon

My falcon comes not back again

To sit upon my wrist with hooded eye
Yielding first his fierce-sought prize

Are these times so easily forgotten?

But still I hope...as so far away he goes
Some alien land with sunny slopes
His swooping shadow knows

Some bright-lit skies with fresh winds laced
My falcon forever flies

Alas how desolate the heart
That scans these vacant skies

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

My Recent Trip To 7-Eleven

As I passed the tiny church at the edge of the little valley-village I heard the clock strike one

I followed the inviting road happy, confident,
twas so smooth beneath my riant feet,
warm yet with heat of day,

The long-long miles unrolled in the stillness of a moonstruck nite
peace and balm nestled gently close within

I went on and on and on till a faint weariness overtook me, so that
I began to stumble, to see the road was no longer smooth
as it once had been, nor warm, but full of little pebbles
and sharp rocks, a bitter wind springing up, an ominous scud of clouds drawing
across an obscuring moon

But me, I persisted, not stopping, the miles now becoming terrible a drudgery,
exactng quite a considerable toll, not to mention the frightful landslides to climb
over and around

The gentle rolling hills clothed in muted verdure, the endless fields, cultivated by
human, machine and beast now arrayed in magnificent splendor far-far below

Glancing ahead along my journeys path I see great rocks piled, innumerable and
strange creating dreary desolate a landscape, stark, foreboding, formidable

It was through this landscape I traveled with an agonizing void forever aching
inside of me

Till at length I paused when the moon once more gave faint agleam to wonder
how far I had traveled, thus turning backwards to see how far, but alas I could
not see the road, it being swallowed up in shadow

Here for me was utter weariness, moon-ragged clouds, silence, solitude, and so
painfully desolate a wind sweeping about my tortured feet

Steadfast I stood there, arming myself to go on, and on and on, the rocks about
me my only companion now

Shivering in the cold biting nite, conscious of the long-long loneliness, of the
countless miles I had so sedulously covered

Petrified with amazement and wonder, and filled with frightful dread!

Suddenly I knew!

I was still within sound of the little valley-village, for I heard the clock strike
two.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Mysterious Possibilities

You have evolved from
what you did
And what you did not do

Both

So whether you are you by

Default

Or definite intention
Who knows?
And what
By any word or praise
or any sneer
Can you raise up a tear down?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Once Upon A Time

All that I am will be no more

Except on the edge
Of some heart here and there

As the memory of

Fingers on soft velvet cheeks

eyes looking into eyes

and so not cease

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

One Day

One day, one day, one day
How long ago I do not know
You felt inside your shoe
Something strange and new?

It drew an ugly word

One daaaaaaay
One day, one day, one day
How long ago I do not know
You saw upon your shoe
Something very old to view
A clod of mud or two
Between the heel and sole

One day, one day, one day
How long ago I do not know
You tried to clean your shoe
Twas something hard to do
The mud (was) hard as you

Between the heel and toe
One day, away, away
One day, one day, one day
I knew, I knew, I knew
I felt it too

A clod of mud to be
Is no bright a destiny
And no brave a hero he!
Who bears this clot that's
Me...

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

One Voice Speaking

How when you are dead
Will you touch other hearts
Unless now when you can
You lay bare your own?

For they that come after
Are the same as those that be
They too will hunger for perfume

And in the sharpness of spring
Perceive that others before them
Have known all that they know

The years will be as nothing
Though they be countless

One voice speaking
Is stronger than death

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Our Hearts Endure

How mutable and unsure
Are all desires that our hearts endure;

How few the certain moments

That we certain are,
Of power and of glory 'neath a crumbling star

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Our Last Quarrel

Strange that a smile
Should slide away like that
As though fallen from her face

That blue-bright eyes could change
Like that to grey-and draw their shutters
All before the paleness fell
And washed her into whiteness

Never our words could be unspoken now
Or taken back, nor this, the stricken hour

Be stricken from me
Nor any reach of heaven
Hold this hell

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Our Pilgrimage

Soon comes an end to our long pilgrimage
seeking some utter assurance, that all is well-
after all our tempestuous fretting and doubting
hoping all shall remain well after destiny brings an end to us

And us in the asking - what now?
surely the sheer bliss of such a blessing
so abundant-far beyond our imagination
is more than enough -but alas it is not

Because unsure are we and
unsure is uncomfortable
if not dreadfully frightening

is this magnificent promise true?

And the cruel invention of time
holds us too much in its tyranny
to shake loose from its grasp
at the first loosening of such
firm binding fetters

This journey being more a long imprisonment
of all the senses than a sense of striving itself

Realizing neither dazzlement nor relief
nor even a sense of doing and having done

The dedication is in the deed-
not the pointing to the deed

And it is not in the knowing after all -
it is in the us being us

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Our Room

I try to think
How it will be
When from my heart
This room is taken

And
the spot where you stood,

And
The sound of falling apples
(outside our window)
By the high winds shaken, I wake
To the silence of the moon, caught
In the twigged trees

And you, will you speak
No more the

Ever- echoing words
When once from my heart
This room is taken?

Alas

From what chrysalis of
Being do I struggle to be born:
Something that cuts to heal
and severs to draw close...?

Or will there be only
Despair and desolation
As a lost child
That cannot mend
Its cherished toy

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Passion

Having spent my passion freely
On great things and small

Loved practically a time or two
And practically with one eye open

Once or twice-
Came to the end of things
not quite content
At the beating inside me
That never folds it's
Wings.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Players

Those that play at life
Must play with death
Even when the sun is shining
Even when the Spring breaks through
Even when the hearts
Like a thing set free
And flying.....

Only a breath divides them
The living and the dying
And the laughing
And the crying
Your turn, then mine.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Plink

PLINK-PLINK-PLINK

Fumble fingers is
Direct, always
Fare and square:

'Hey' cried the tidily-
wink sailing
through the air

PLINK-PLINK-PLINK

(Once in the pot though
he'll never care-

There's forty-thousand
fidily winks already
there)

PLINK-PLINK-PLINK

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Precaution

The spider has a secret
guideline to assist-
but of what grand puzzle
does this consist?

what is this mystery so complex?

a construction without fear
or dread
the spider presses on ahead

an effort in diligence is woven fine
with each and every exotic line

there's no way to figure it all out
but here is part of what it's about

tis true and often it is said
a spider falls not into its own web

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Quest

The hearts quest
for power over itself
Was not answered
By the lamp reflected
In the curved glare
Of the China cupboard

Its small pool of brightness
Gleaming.....

Nor the litany
Of the cracked record
Playing endlessly

The same song
Of wantonness
And despair

Explained.....

But the softness
That edges dreams and
Falls in crevices

And the shyness of
Moonbeams that lurk
In the folds
Of curtains

Was there.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Rejection

The heart will not trust ashes
to be chosen, but doubts
that it can be:
If you say that you were not loved,
someone else was chosen
you are mistaken

Love had no hand
in your undoing
Do not fault love
It is necessary to see that
He who looks for excellence and
is willing to die for beauty
is no lover;
He is a chooser only!
To be rejected by such
means nothing

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Reminiscence

I did not say
I have come home

I stood beside the fence
On which the persimmon vine
Still held it's summer leaves

And evidence of great
purple blossoms,
it once bore

That were no more

The milkweed silently
Beside it with it's pods
Ready for refining
In the autumn sun

I stood beside the mossy bank
Below the middle wood
Where violet leaves were showing

The old barn warmed itself
Upon the meadow side

And here the duck
came down to rim
The little pool of water
From which the horses drank

From here the trail
became too-far, too-steep

Far away- this distant day

Now comfortsmeinsleep

I did not say
I have come home

□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Restless Visions

Petulant child,
what was it you thought
You would be given?
What far universe,
What heaven

This is your place
The earth
There is no other earth,

No other place,
no other heaven

When you think of earth
You know it is
the deepest thing in you

To look where your two feet stand
And know that everyone
stands thus

On the earth as you do,
All children of one another

Where would you stand
if you did not

Stand on this earth?
The question being this:

Will I now stand by her?
This earth that gave us birth

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Risks

There is no eagerness
Without risks regret

No full impulse
That asks no toll...

No nakedness of soul
That does not shiver
In the wintry blast

Atleast one time...
And hear the clock strike

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Robots

When robot lips
Speak their robot words
What will hear
But a robot ear.....
Will the robot world
Dream it's robot dreams
And all be the same
As it now seems?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Safe And Sound

Walk out does not mean
To walk free
Let the magician tell you
About the silver cord
And the tyranny
Of the body

That will stand
Just so much foolishness:
Back quickly now
Hand over hand

Down the cord
And once again
Safe in prison-

tis a good sleight- of- hand trick
The projection of the
Self out of the body
But very wearing
And hardly worth it-

The encircling demons
And the evil spirits you meet
Are hardly enchanting-

To trade one mask for another
Or one world for another
Means hardly anything

Anything at all.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Safe Havens

Without thought I stood beside the country road
caught in some hiatus of being
Soft breeze - autumn sun - humming silence
a trembling leaf that falls
to join the yellow splendor at my feet

I ponder- this must vanish?
All my joy
Go to some dark oblivion?

Belatedly I know

Safe in the havens of having been
All this cannot now un-be
And is forever fixed, and in me

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Searching

To turn
From the anguish
Of the world
Is not to escape it.....

In the green glades of the hills
The cries will follow you

Which you will not hear:
They echo in some limbo
beyond time

Where the heart is split

Maybe some day you can say:
Anger, be red

Purpose be iron

And all will be
As the magic of a shaman
walking into things not out

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Send A Telegram

Beyond the campfire of a misting morning,
as embers slowly die, curls a wisp of ephemeral smoke
fading, fading, fading into distant eternity...

Tis just a brief communique
to inform you
Mr. Stag
stalkers now have you in their sight

Blowing snow.....gusting winds...silent solitude....
brutally harsh environs.....
.....the dead of winter has arrived

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Shapes

Despair does not know
What it shapes
In the gaunt-eyed hours
Of its hopeless grief

When its fumbling fingers
Shove at life
To push away, hoping
That all will cease
To be

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Silent Screams

Suffering is silent
Makes no noise
Muter than air:
But it is there
Misery has no speech:
Has a slant of the shoulders
A certain way of walking
Something about the mouth
A look in the eye:
Only the poet speaks
Listen to him, she, or them
You cannot heed
The silent screams?
There are things in us
Deeper than hell
Wilder than dreams

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Since You Are Gone

Since you are gone the stones lie differently along the ground
and words that are the same now have a different sound

-and-

sharp and clear in early dawn there is a road I cannot travel on

Since you are gone- since you are gone

Since you are gone the path seems steeper still

there seems to be more brambles on our hill

More birds that do not sing

more insects that do sting

Since you are gone- since you are gone

Since you are gone the stones lie differently along the ground

-and-

Words that are the same

Now have a different sound

-and-

Sharp and clear in early dawn

There is a road I cannot travel on

Since you are gone- since you are gone

Palling winds, blow softly now, I dread

foreboding echos lament beside my bed

How soon the embers glow is lost-

how soon the darkness comes and frost

And sharp and clear in early dawn there is a road I cannot travel on

Since you are gone-

Since you are gone

There is a road I cannot travel on

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Sky

The morning sky
Intense and blue is not shut out
By eyelids closing.....

From the worlds edge, blue
Clear and forever the sky
Comes towards me shining.....

The sky's blue breaks

Inside.....

My soul is vivid
Clean and filled like a cup

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Slip

One split second
I'm putting my foot
On the first step of
the front porch and

ZIP

I land on the precipitous crack
disappearing

and hopefully when I focus on
The fix of my earth- position
There is nothing there

The earth has not been born-:
the earth is being born -
so I can see it happen

Talk about a thrill
(or a cold chill!)- then further
and further in

And on and on through all earth's
struggles to be -
I survive until at length

Drats!

I Can't put it off -
got to get back into

The old body
Got another swing to do
Before I can knock off
for the day

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Smokey (A Poem For The People Of London England)

Angry is the tiger
Who prowls
in the SMOKE

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Somehow I Dream

Oh say all- who will say- that all perfection
Holds but a little moment and is gone
And so this all so perfect day must vanish

Somehow I dream another dream
that it can never go

And is eternal, will not sink
to nothingness, will endure
in the hearts core and the bloods coursing

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Something Is Listening

Something is listening

So many voices
So much talking
So little space,
Plenty of walking,
But no arriving;

I wade and call and reach.....
but no breach
Through the silent air-or in the silent air

For there's nobody there
But something is listening.....

And behind the wall
Is an empty cistern
And wide in the sky
Is an empty eye

And for all my striving and all of my trying
Nothing is safe in the hand
Or safe in the pocket
But my dead man's curl
In this bent locket

So many voices
So much talking
So little speech□
Plenty of walking
But no arriving
I wade and call
And reach

But there's no breach

Through the silent air-or in the silent air

For there's nobody there

But something...

~~Yes~~...something is listening.....

And behind the wall

is an empty cistern

And wide in the sky

Is an empty eye

BUT SOMETHING IS LISTENING....

For all the strength

I spent in my striving

Nothing is safe in the hand

Or safe in the pocket

But my dead man's curl

in this bent locket□

BUT SOMETHING IS LISTENING

Silence..Somewhere spoke? ...

And something is listening.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Something Red

Something red is
Hazing the sky

Oh heart your bleeding
Is not anymore than I

Our deaths are similar
We were prey
And just a little less wise
Than they

Oh you and I
Oh heart are bleeding

And have bled

Something red is
Hazing the sky-and eyes
ask:

Why?

Can this be all?

Something bred
Something dread
Something dead

Something red is
Hazing the sky

Oh yes dear heart
That's all:
All that can be said

In running blundered
A panic took our heads
Heedless - the path led here

To this most sacred place
Oh you and I
We go together - our time draws nigh

Something red is
Hazing the sky

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Stranger

I saw the day the world was fair
I walked a strange road
To a strange field and
You were there

I Raised my eyes so casually
Some stranger in my path to scan
And recognized this as truth
And the world for me began

Our time as quick as sunlight ran

Our past forever far away
A zillion years our yesterday

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Susan Greenfield-Baroness Greenfield

Passion reason, the sighting eye
The hand that launched to kill
Or perhaps worse, and not recall

Does the arrow remember these
As it flies to mark?

No!

But on more careful thought

Yes!

It cannot forget, its mode of memory
Faultless, structured in being

Complete in action, sure to hit

So tis true with the words we write:
Do follow a distant power primeval

Unconscious from some past unknown
In them some essence, not theirs

Some far bowman sighting, some arm lifted
Some mark sped to drifted ages since

Now all thrumming within
Their flying perfect, their strike certain

As we travel this enchanting place

Are we not all bowman
And target in this space?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Doors

Reality is nothing we can grasp
Has no certain shape

Nothing to entice
by being ever so nice

And there is no door
To pass through with ease
As you would please

No convenient expedient

Nor know you they are there
If you should care
From an outside view
To examine a few and see what is true

For there are no walls..for the not real doors
No exotic floors- for these not real doors

So

The doers do,
and know nothing
The sayers say
what the doers do

As if only they knew
As they search for a clue

Asking what should we do?

But beyond this is
Something more:

But there is no door - and always
The same dilemma,

Inconvenient...Vexing... Hexing... Perplexing..

MOST indubitably
to say the least - to grapple this insuperable beast

You cannot be certain
of a door for the doers

Is it all an illusion
of constant confusion?

Shall we conjure Vincent Price -
seek his advice
A list of supplies
to prevent our demise?

It is so horrific what we have done-
what we've become- made our own sun-

Just a flash away- maybe today-

Zombies do sleep late -
but will wake with a start
to have reality so abruptly

Depart

□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Dust Never Settles

Seeing not the imperceptible
Destruction of the self as a simple grace

She thought it quite likely
One could remain

An unsplitable rock
In a secret place

Else she would have waisted herself
And lived

Ceaselessly

Wind would have worn the stone
and left nothing visible
but the dust

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Grand Abyss

Finally now, we see below us
The abyss over which we have traveled
All these years the whisper- thin
Web of our imagining
Between us and destruction,
Mere shreds of no meaning

Wondering with increasing fascination
What's down there when we fall?
As we all must fall - and land
Is it more of the same - but harsher?
Oblivion with no dreams of enrapture

To the last measure the mind
Spins out it's boundless fancy
And though we say cease it does not cease
Envisions only broken threads
Where the others fell through
The silence of the air
With no breath of a whisper

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Key

I sought the key that was promised me
hid in the sand of the lonely land

But I saw the key that was promised me
snatched from my hand in the lonely land -
dragged by the tides far out to sea-
carried by the waves far away from me

I didn't know that the path would end
by the ocean side and the dark descend
and I on the beach would sink and moan -
seeking in the night by myself alone

With the sea behind and
the sea before and the
shifting sands of an endless shore
an island alone in the sea and sky

Where I might search until the day I die

I've made a fire of bits and scraps
and dream of a door that might open perhaps
I being a dreamer and dreamer me -
and I in a dream found the dream lost key

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Natural Boundaries Of Hope

Nothing but a spiders web of nerves
Expecting flies and payment for ones labor
Or someone cold into a warm spot sinking
To wrap in a quilt of bliss
In other words Gods kiss

I cannot do what I would do

I would still myself under the stars tonight
Under the white moon far away and cold
I would remember, I would forgive
And be forgiven too, and finally forget

But tomorrow again as ever
I will pass through the bent grass, and
Fiercely whisper a rabbit was killed
Down there on the road last night
And weep for it - though I weep for something else

For I cannot do What I would do

And the beating wings in me will never cease
Be quiet! Be quiet, in there oh mindless X of mankind, and
My own mindless X that beat like bat wings so
Return hang quiet once again
In that subterranean cave of the soul
Where neither pity nor remorse is

Cease beating

I cannot do what I would do

Ah tonight, tonight I would turn and smell the coming of the rain
Sweet rain that may never again come thus
For the web of the worlds weaving is set
And never as of yore will the next rain be but

Deadlier

That melts to the bone and washes the battle fields

And none can do what they would do

Only the hidden savagery of the heart at last
Lies there and in plain day we must kneel
To some terrible God of retribution and of woe
And give into his bloody keeping
The soft heart that jumps so -

And I cannot do what I must do

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Saucepan

The saucepan shows the moon
A rounded pearl
Beneath the water lying

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Scarf

The scarf lay in wait
For Isadora Duncan
Though the design was not
Yet in the designers eye
Or the cloth woven:

A serpent coiled in the future
As the oak in the acorn

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

The Wall

Sometimes in extremity as I recall
I used to turn and stroke the wall

Fingertips against the smoothness
over and over and over

There was some meaning
concealed there and yet

Not hidden, open for the taking
it soothed some desolation in me

To imagine this; that there was speech between us
between my fingers and the wall as I recall

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

These Hungry Ears

There is an opposite
Of love
That is unlove

Not hate

That's absent from
the scene
Not present as hate
is

Watching

Intent

Noticing

Hate at least is there
forever vigilant

Maybe better for some
than this beast of uncaring

That mildly and insipidly answers
here when gone

And yes
without a thought

Yes indeed, there is an opposite
of love

That is not hate

That turns away from
the stray words and last thought

And on the budding dream

abstractedly closes the door

Gleefully perusing something else
closer and dearer....

But will not say to hungry ears
a thought out no, nor contemplative perhaps,
or any such tiny tidbit

That would so please and delight
these hungry ears....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

This Bedside Vigil

A spontaneous glow of great mirth
encompass her features
a smile alit upon her lips

The usual matter-of-fact features
smooth out to reveal something
which plainly says

'What fools these mortals be! '

Not a dancing glee-

No mischief there
nor merriment, but nevertheless mirth,
maybe in her eyes
something that sees life

Who sees it whole, and still stands laughing
no wryness, no bitterness
yet

And so we pray

Oh God-let it be
no-not another tomorrow
before she passes free

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

This Day

So dawns this day
And we know not
What it may say
What bring
Of tender ridicule
Solicitude perhaps

Or hidden malice springing

Some wonder
Some sting

Something
Maybe
That bids the heart
To sing
Something
That once again
Will pray:

'No more! No more! '

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Tidbits□

This day will never begin again
(Nor this hour, nor this minute)
I will look carefully to see what is in it

Not mislay it, shove it aside and loose it
When we say life - this is as itsits

We will not get any extra little tidbits

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Tiny Distractions

Those things in our lives
that do not bear dwelling upon

at a guess are legion

and

so are tiny distractions
that alleviate our despair

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Tis So Curious

Tis so curious how a mind creates the limbo in which it must dwell
How the soul scuttles desperately about like a small animal hiding
Quiet in great chaos- these curious circumstances-
can fascinate and confound -

Pondering how the soul gives up its life to the terrible objects surrounding it -so
that by mysterious and strange osmosis it is encrusted-ensconced-beyond itself,
immured in the body it begat

Perhaps by some mysterious order of things.. a carefully crafted refuge, a
harboring thicket of distraction thus mercifully displaces reason, beacons beyond
all distress and tumult, whispering in gentle familiar refrain- forget, forget, forget
you are now safe from all this pain...

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

To Irene

Memory is very good at cropping

Seeing is selective at the first glance
allowing us to notice today as an expanse based
entirely on what we once could see

Yesterday, and tomorrow, we can see
really see, what we thought we saw today

For there is a special kind of dawdle time.

Hearing is different somehow,
permitting you more,
withholding less...

First the grass sang to you

Then the locusts;
then the wind moaned..

Now sounds of desolation can
comfort us, that from the very worst
we remember the very best

□

That these are the
□itanies of our own despair,

And we give them room to live within us,
because simply knowing one
is itself a kind of love.

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

To Them That Did What We Did Not

We sent substitutes, you know
And sat out safe...
We let others fight in our place
We let others die
Dipped in liquid hell and ice
And forever, hid our eyes

Slogged unbelieving through the
Human slaughter house
We did buy freedom for ourselves
At a dreadful cost
And strove not
Nor paid the debt

Do we forget what we must pay?
There's something there of honor

Hearts that once did miseries share
Lost now in stone
Our substitutes were
BOUGHT you see,
And we owe them yet...
Our liberty...

We owe them yet
Some vision of a world
Where honest men abide

Who will before they pass
Beyond our ken
Render some homage
To such men
□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Together

When comrades have strength enough themselves
to shoulder the burdens
of their dearly beloved friends
they willingly do so

They carry-on until the end of all their strength
to give a final measure
until they enduring
far beyond themselves
also falter and fall
so now together they lie-

And so together they meet
their final moments

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Tolerance

Our tolerance of familiar things
is pretty notorious

The monsters face does not grow kinder
as we come closer

Tis we who change,
our skids are greased between
revulsion and embracing

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Trucks

That I am!
Covered with clutching thoughts that cling

I will have no truck to their wildness
plucking them off, thrusting them wildly away

On the other hand?

I will have no truck
with smooth suave smoothness either

No insidious insinuations that accumulate
in stray corners

What?
Sometimes I ask myself, WHAT will I have truck with

Perplexed! ? !

Did Ford Maddox Ford have truck with Ford trucks
or dismiss the idea with peremptory wave of pen?

Or did he actually prefer riding a mad ox?
Horsepower be damned move or get whammed!

Or go on long walks over hillside and glen?

It's a not knowing that tortures a soul to the end

With death?
I will have truck with death - I will deal with it!

When it comes

Until then I will persist in my oddity

Neither the prickly, nor the smooth
Nor the sly in filtering will I permit

I will turn from all
Thought of these things
Park on my stoop and watch
Ford trucks pass as I sit

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Trust

Trust prefers everything
Singles out nothing

A small talisman
Carved in the hand
Like a warm stone

To ward off

Evil

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Truth

A quest for what?
Oh yes
Truth

I became distracted
For a brief instant

This curious and noble pursuit
For truth-what else?

Captivates - bemuses - enthralls
Mesmerizes - fascinates - intrigues

Far more than just a few

Tis true-so truly true

Truth seems on the surface of it
Most laudable - a high calling
But having seen the heaps
Of it's ambiguous dust

Somehow I much prefer
The maybe not-so-monstrous

Lies that mist-like
Hide faceless
Give dreams hope
And let the soul live

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Uncertain Sea

When your tide goes sweeping out to sea
Let it be - do not despair - nor cast lament
Let not imagination conjure rip and rent

For this may be-this journey on uncertain sea

A journey of things never imagined- so grand

Far-far more exhilarating than things thus planned

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Unpicked

Not to be chosen that was
The sting
Drinking bitter medicines
Or Sweet
Could not cure us
We did not get well:
We had fallen too early

Under the evil spell...
Not privy to our fate
Or the ordering of it

All that was left was
hate-

We were not one
Of the lucky nine
Or the lucky eleven
Or the lucky five
or the lucky one...

Not knowing the ways
Of choosing
We had never the less had to
Choose:
And choosing became the
Ultimate hatred:

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Unseen

Untouched a petal falls:

As I see an unseen world

Yeild up its essence

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Useless

Precious I am not
Being neither stone nor flower
Wine, good food or health
Nor am I riches

Having no expanse of being
Nor any depth to probe,
Nor elemental
As running water or blowing wind
Or soil to nourish

As such- so carefully considered
And regarded this glorious creation
Useless! ? !

Then pondering hence- in whatever manner
A majestic contemplation - perhaps

Does the useless also have it's use?
That in it's presence
It defines and redefines
Our grand illusions

And bounds about the useful
So as to show
A purpose which it has
And lost itself -it saves
Precious

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Violets(To Keats)

Who looking at violets
Does not think of Keats?

And thinking of Keats
Does not believe in God

If only to thank him
For Severn.....

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Way Up There

Could you fly up there
In the empty air
Nothing but air
Everywhere - free to get lost
Free to NOT BE-
Not be as a bee

Free of all - free to fall?

I thought of the zillion
and one points of the law
boiled down to two

You love and I love
And nothing more to do

And away we fly
In the high sky

In the empty air

No one's there - so rare, so rare
Is the empty air

Majestic machines they live there
in the empty air
Or birds carelessly dipping wings

Those things

Flying so high - so high - so high in the empty sky - empty sky...

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

We Climbed The Bald That Day (A Poem For Johnny)

He went with me to the top
of the mountain
No one else would go...
Because it was
Too steep...
Or too slow...

There was a clearing
To be held in the heart's core
Something like Innisfree...

Strange rocks and dense scrub
Where the wind blew
Foreboding and menace
That the sun slipped through;

The place we stood was desolate...□
The veil slid sideways,
Dragged in the sky
And through some gap
Was a true far view

Nothing to be known
Again, ever again
Something....
beneath the canopy of trees

The trail guessed at not seen
We knew the strike against us
Too much heart

Everything soaked in silence
That the sun seeped through
As though something stirred
□□
And almost woke

We had the climb,
the struggle to win

And the thrill of the long view
When it was done

The lake was a pond in the valley
And the trees under our feet
Massed down the slope:

We waited under
bright open sky
For something to speak

But nothing spoke

We were not the same
After we went down

Because now we knew;

We were the ones, the only ones..
Who knew, what the wind knew,
And the sun knew,

And the old ones
Knew

□

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

We Have Forgotten

Oh, of course it was not Freddie-
my lovable dog-and his breakfast
the look of the river-the trains going by

Reflecting thus -feeling a pang of nostalgia-the ending of another year

For one joy lost
we must forever strive beyond
our regret to replace this sorrow
with another pleasure-and so forget

But the past still lingers in some ongoingness
of homesick yearning
that can't be banished
or forgotten by such device

As we become-some past essence still remains
ephemeral it seems- but never ceasing
we suffer without knowing why-
for what we have become -without knowing it

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

We Were

Too soon gone into
Something else,
Too quick-silver
Sliding, gone

Lost in some corner
Irretrievably not today
What we were yesterday

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

What Do You Think?

From a comparative calm
of hard earned solitude
a solicitous question beckons

If that a thing reigned in
and made to go its pace anew
be not better off

Or released into its own splendor
even if it be the splendor of
a falling star
be not better off?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

What I Have Found

How I have been driven
What gauntlet I took up
What gauntlet I threw down
It does not matter

I found little birds in hiding
I found rain slick pavements
Sodden bushes
Winds tormenting eyes
Teasing inside!

I found webs of intrigue

Silence in the sun
Chasms too wide
Mountains too high

Hankering and hungering
And crying after the moon

I have walked past forever
And the morns not given

I now settle for a lowlier heaven
And sink to surety at last

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

What We Love

What we love is as mutable and uncertain as any other reality
The passing face - life passing - a smile passing by-
What does it signify- mean - imply

Just the turning of a head - the lifting of a hand
The cadence somewhere of something lost in times mist

A childhood bedtime kiss

Looks from eyes and words from lips
Laughter that triumphed and laughter that enraged
Laughter softened on the rim of enchantment

Loving now things past despised -hated - neglected

Rejected

When a little farther along lifting as morning fog
just a bit beneath

We see what was never seen before - the beauty of it all
Grandeur of something eternal that will not diverge

It is all a mystery and a guess
Circulating blood and hearts quest

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Who Iz Izzie Cooper? ? ? ?

Who Iz Izzie Cooper

Par for the course?

I think.....

Some delighted in me

Some were aghast at me
dismayed, appalled,
shocked!

Yes! ! !

Shocked, shocked, shocked
Indeed, most indubitably
She did that! ...When?
Oh, no, my-my-my....

Some thought me
more wise
more steadfast

Than I was you see
This mysterious me

sometimes dour
sometimes glee

Naked in deed
Naked in thought

Overwrought!

Still hid I from
The hunters blade
Maybe this or that
But never staid

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Who Knows?

By such trivial things
Is the soul kept alive□
It hardly knows...

But in swift-passed instants
What gives it courage to go on?

Perhaps

Direct and full
in some thought dwells?

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Windows

'Not by the Eastern Windows
Only

When comes the morning

Comes in the light'.....

Knowledge indirect

(We live by warnings
And omens - fly by
the seat of our pants)

Most things important
We know are subterranean

Things

Of unconscious thought.....

Things inaccessible
to our intelligence - yet ever present always

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Windy

Windy was wild
December's child
She could not bide
she could not stay

Running away into the night
out of my sight into
The gray
forever

□
She came like a zephyr In
Spring - scented gown
With great joy my heart did abound -
So was like sunshine
My soul in caressing
to such pleasures of joy expressing

□
Then swirling and tossing to dire degree
as wild gale drives desperate a sea
fierce wind and waves ignore every plea

as comes a flash of illuminate light
too-quiet a calm drifts through a dark night
filled with a dread and terrible a fright
this torturous distress is not made aright

casting thus beyond an immense expanse
endless a journey of maddening perchance

thereupon a distant horizon clearing
gentle breezes nearing -sunlit skies appearing

All left for a mind to ponder, consider and muse
seeking solace from clouds of bemuse

Windy, carries on beyond a song
My sorrows confessing
gone like the storm
My heart possessing

No silken net can bind her
No words like these can find her
She leaves the past behind her

Windy was wild
December's child
Not to be caught
Not to be bound
Just to be sought not to be found
running out of my life into the grey forever

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

With Me

And will you go with me?

You give your hands
I hold them close

To me you pledge
Ever faithfull affection

And now I rise

I give my arm
For you to hold

A heart of joy untold
Our adventure-
new unfolds?

Shall we go together and

Part the curtain of the world

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Wondering No More

The dead stir not from
their last measurement
But metely lie
bewilderment put by
wondering no more

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

You

Never from me can you go

As from me never
Can there go
That which I am.....

No need as one in heartsick labor
To seek either without
Or within to find you

Dispersed into my being and anchored there

Beyond the tearing out, the losing or the defacing;

In my breathing, you

And in my final letting go

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

You Just Had To Ask!

Someone imbued of considerable distinction and rank
Was quite injudiciously asked-what do you think?

Whispering -(I do respectfully convey-
I know far more than they)

Pointing thence with denunciatory digit

Yes that cost-plus-ill defined gathering
of buffoons-fools-knaves and ne'er do wells
why their number-it just swells
and swells and swells!

And as for me you can plainly see I am just one
but I do have a son and a wife (not a spouse)
and an elegant house
commute here and there go everywhere-
all done with great fervor and flair

The voice continues this way and that
(oh, yes we do have a cat)
for an interminable time-

the weather's just fine!

Such'conversation' becoming more tortuous
a-monologue-
or shall we just say a trifle one sided
as the endearing expression is said-
drones on-and-on-and-on in the head

Did I mention the incessant campaign
night after night-with no ending in sight?

They give us the news-while expressing their views
is the election unfair-do you really care?

What cheerleaders wear! - That's why we stare! -Pink underwear!
Yackety-yack, convertibles are back- buying clothes off the rack

don't blow your stack! ! !

Twas all very nice for a pleasant short time,
but that pleasant short time has so quickly passed by
Now a word in edgewise is what I shall try
as I just as respectfully-say my cordial
bye-bye

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Youth

In youth impatient
Never content with
half-way,
now
Half crippled, half deaf, half-blind
Half-mad..... he'd just as soon
Not push on..... half way
is sufficient
Let it rest there!

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper

Zeek Is That You?

From the dark tree fallen

A songbirds last note

Shines into silence

Nellie Isabelle Steward Cooper