Poems By
Michael W. Largay

Ex Libris
Michael Largay

For Michael Largay

January 1, 1932.
Confitebor Tibi in ethora Deus, Deus Mears.
Great Enigma

A half-opened door concealing yet disclosing,
I meeting, yet repelling
and further advance
The mystery of ages
baffling and embalming
Warning yet enticing the adventure of chance.

#
Help Wanted

I Journal of Outdoor Life - College Course.

I need someone to share my life.

To be my pal, my cook and nurse.

To shave my beard and find.

To clean my desk and fill my glass.

To hum a tender lullaby.

To turn the toast and take a cry.

To run her fingers through my hair.

To lie, in short, my light, my star.

I've searched about the market.

And found a childish, lovely face.

She must be sweet - I said.

Her weeds, her hair,

A ribbon in her longish hair.

I hardly know just where to start.

To try to win this maid's heart.

There must be some romantic way -

Some song to sing, or words to say?

On the Ditch Common.
Mea Culpa [Lowell Evening Star]
The poets love
The world of dreams they make
While they who live in dream all day
To wake. [College Courier]
#

By A Stream
[College Courier]
This stream is life.
Its end is in the sky.
No tears! We start, we live,
and then
We die.
#

Reproach
[9 Oct. 1]
your words last night
Were coined to watch the moon.
The night and we, you both
To soon.
#
The Mourner

In the gray of the dawn
I saw a weeping willow tree,
Laden with last night’s rain,
Bend low its thin branches
To spill its tears into a pool.
#

Advice

Be still my heart;
The wounds you bear are sore.
Forget this dance macabre and love
No more.
#

I grope for light
In storms that no one sees;
While all about, the sun is
Warm and white.

I swoon.
Women

I cast your lines by Eddie Raymond.

They call you little boy because a part of you is younger than your years, and when you say you're twenty-two,

They pull your cheek and smile, "I know they say, and add, "Dear Child!"

Sometimes they seem so sage you feel quite immature.

And though you hide your boots behind your back

But when the heels fall off their shoes; and rain; or waiters bring burnt toast, they kindly say a word at night

And right before you say good night, they cry long with you.
Atque Vale.
I found of outdoor life -pringing
Goodbye to health
A shining penny spent...
I never knew its worth until
I went.
#
Goodbye to youth
That lingered for a while
And crept away as softly as
A smile.
#

Philosophy Of Winter
I want to hold
Your hand, fair miss;
It's far too cold,
In weather like this,
To stand apart
Or hold your heart!
The Debtor
[Oct 1, 1933]
You stole a dream,
A gift by angels sent,
By wallowing up my attic stairs
That rent.

You killed a dream
By pounding on my door,
And now you stand in
And roar.

Mr. Landlord
A loser wins in dreams
Where aides are dulled and
Hearts are soothed.

It seems.

This morning, sir,
We met on fragile ground,
And she was mine, still
To pound.
you stole a dream
soft mist and white of snow—
What’s this, you cannot give it back?

Then go!
#

This Time That Moves

A chubby little boy
Wearing a wistful look
On his very round face—
I can see him yet—
Viewing the sweet array
Behind a bakery window,
With all the art of
A hungry little boy...

Was that so long ago,
Or do I see him still
In this grave man
Who contemplates the cakes
Moved by the same desire?
#
The Old Man

[Alentown-Feldling Sentinel]

He sits all day in the sun
Warming himself;
Stirring the chilled blood
That once sang lustily.
But now the cold is creeping on,
For he is old...
All summer long he sat like this
Wearing clothes that would fit a man

Twice his weight;
Feeling nothing.
Not even the hills,
Or the rock on the village green—

Townsmen still tell their sons
About the rock, and the man
Who carried it to the green
When he was young.
About the giant blacksmith
Who broke his back
Across the stone;
And how, since then, no one
Has tried his strength
So fame still sits with the
giant old man.
looking in the sun,
And small boys gape...
But the ritter died nothing,
Remembering only that he
is old
And cold.

An unseen Indian creeps
Across the sleeping New England
town,
Staining the trees with
vivid paints
And the hills with flame
and golden gold.
The leaves begin to fall
Bleeding...
The old man slumbers now
In the frosty air,
And gazes towards the hills,
seeing... smelling... fall.
If not one sees little ledge the
yard,
He thinks he'll take a walk.
I will not sing to you, not sing a pl
The Great once sang, once used a glow
So sweetly sang sang the near immortal
As troubadors of love sang touchingly
So why sing poet now in minor key?
And yet I find the world is so
The mother, night, conceals you
Oh, lady, being the night they say you
Now swear
Of laurel world will heat a
Before
And
Toni where you walk within snow
As
Are weared ribbons in their
oehid (girld) liet
To keep hukes spark from
bubling into flame
And deal us more with fragile
bits of glass
With eager hands too stiff
To meet fame
And much too elastic face
To watch her pass
What matters if your voice is
small loud or sad,
When speak, somehow, you must or else go mad?
#
1934
Vagabond
Always goodbye
And melted eyes at dawn;
Always a shaking suicide and I am gone
#
Portrait
[Blue Moon]
His eyes
With a sweeping glance
Coolly measured her soul
And with a careless shrug entombed her youth.
Portraits of Nurses

In Kansas City, I found a nurse,
whose face is lovely with a
chiseled kindness,
that is just a trifle stiff,
with rigid little lines about
the eyes.

Recalling the classic lines,
"Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness."

She does not kick the bed
as she goes by, but slowly,
and starts to feed an old man
who is losing his sight.

She is a mother, kind feeding
her typhoid patients
patiently, tenderly.
And now, I see that she is
a slender girl
with tired, little marks about
her eyes.
II

When I was so very sick
Here was the tenderest hand
That touched me.

She is the kind of woman
That serve in every war
And pestilence.

And love it.

The kind that are never

Happy

Without making noble

Stories.

She gave me a medal of the

Blessed Virgin

And that day the fever

Left me.

When the pain was gone

I could see that she had

A dark mass

Of soft waving hair,

And that she had a tiny

Beauty mark.

On both rounded cheeks.

But by this time she was

Lending

Over a youth moaning with pain,

With a tender look on her face.
III

She is a woman continually at war with herself.
Because she is woman.
Here is a dual nature with a
smoldering flame
of dislike for men, that is
not so much dislike
as something else that bears
a softer name.
She has a feline bite
and her eyes knew at her
thoughts.
Until some man calls—
Some man who needs her—
She is all woman now.

IV

This burden less was at
my side.
When I came out of either
Her face was swelling
And I could not see it any
But it looked kind,
And where I had just
Come from
It was dark and awful.
"You angel," I whispered
and went back to hell.
"Thank you," she said.
From then on when I
needed care
I got the best there was.
If she was near.
Confession

To all

I am Jongleur, the wandering minstrel; I weave songs for all who can to hear; I tell tales to young and old. I fall in love, fall out again and then part.

To children

I have been in many strange lands, and brought back many tales that will make your skin stand up (or if you take your locks some other way) will make you laugh until they curl. But if your eye shoots droop at close of day, will best you off to dark midnight land.
Inspiration

I "Lowell Evening Leader."

Child, brother, and driver of hayforks,

This year old driver of hayforks,

Daughter of Canadian mounted,

Fillette de Apre le ronteux,

Singer of songs of voyagers,

Where are the audes of your songs,

"My sturdy little mother?"

The songs you sang to me,

Reflecting songs of early spring and

Boating at my father, Biemjubs

And small boys who tease their little

sisters.

It is strange I do not hear

The northern rivers

Or see the lakes and forests

Of your lullabies;

But see only the sweetest girl

Of the hayforks,

And the naive little mother who

Comes to the hospital

With word of carnations doing well

Upon the window sill.

And the first few blades of green grass

On the North Common.
Prayer

Dedication

Oh Christ, I dedicate myself to the priestly
life. In this, the priestly life is

Oh Giver of Eternal Truth, grant it
May light the kingdom of the blind.

TOAST

If you would taste the wine
Of life and leave your mouth
Untouched by lesser drink, my friend,
Die young.

To think we can create a perfect thing
Or quite avoid the critic’s sting.
Beneath the cloak of some fair cave
Absolve them, God, of what we
know of hunger, cold and poor
Their lies, their greed, and little
But hear our cry. The jaded
hand that rules the pot
Pours aid into fledgling souls
#

Sweet Peas

In some quaint old town, England

I know a girl of uncommon grace
Who bears the image of police brow
And wears a dress in which I trace
A beauty finer than the face
That dissolves in culture's care.
#

Concerning Poesy

Not I

O'er you, my sweet
Will I live just lyric long
Not you I love, or I also sing
But Song.
And in the mirror that shows true will Found Columbines and Hemlock. You could a flower And gracefully waltz with God. Where once the trend of attack and fear, The gentlest of flowers still rose the 1434. The gentlest of flowers still rose. You could a flower And gracefully waltz with God. Where once the trend of attack and fear, The gentlest of flowers still rose the 1434.
To The Sisters Of H.Michaels
I Blue Moon I
I often wonder if my songs
Are heard inside your convent walls;
I sing my purest songs for you
When Monday falls.
I often wonder if you missed
The lovely words a stile away;
you will recall the songs I sing,
you will, someday.

To A Student Nurse
I Boycot and Contemporary Verse I
Maintain the dream
That lives in your clear eyes;
There is no breeze or meadowland
When that light dies.
Give all to dreams,
For only dreams are real,
And angels paint the eastern sky
When dreams have kneel.

#
A slave to His Master's Daughter

Today you smiled at me, a common slave,
The while you passed the galley where I row;
But did you know that lovely smile you gave
Could hurt me more than any Roman's blow?
Do you recall that glance now that you know
Your father's galley chains are smoother than
The maid who lets me know I am a man?

#

Resignation

The singing pine
Has lost its way to die.
The aegis knows she topples with
A sigh
#
Silent song

[ Arentour ]

God gave me song that does nothing
Mute song of weak men dying
God gave me song be meant to
Suicase to faint souls crying

What love have men of silent song
And brash of white steps falling
What ears are given to the strong
To hear a soft voice calling?
Request

I will be kind if you will play
A tender roundelay, if you can
For when you play, I know the
My heart's light will softens away.
But if you sing to me, you'll sadly sing
My heart away.

Oh do not sing of infinite stars falling!
And still the song of fond hearts calling!
Aeby Artificer

Of gentle artifice I built my walls
To bring my little songs of make believe
For aeby guests who filled my spacious stalls,
And dwelt among the far-ey'd race who weave
Sty tapestries of dreams for those
That life be sweet. And thus I
I'm dwelling pain and bitterness away
I'm veiling eyes that shunned a
Naked truth.
Of let's pretend my early world
And there was anything that dreams
Could buy.
A soft-eyed girl, or knightly cavalier.
I think that I would live there yet,
Had not my somber self and I met.

To A Fragile Warrior

Behold
The sickenly tree,
How soon its leaves are red,
And see this fragile girl whose words
Are gold.

The Deer And The Sage

He stood before the fortune teller's tent
And read the message on the fokiri sign.
"A yogi of the East am I, from him
Your hand reveals a tale in every line."
The knowledge of all future things divine."
A frightened look was on the watcher's face
He tied his hands and quickly flew the place.
On some far day

On some far day when worlds are mine

He said with rosy lifted head,
Then I, perhaps, shall wed some lovely golden thing—
A king’s offspring,
He said.

The worlds are waiting somewhere still
To raise the dreamer’s quill,
While he waits pale and ill
to hear a small girl say

On some far day...

I will.

#

Second performance
[ Courier Citizen]

Like this:
you stood, white-faced,
your golden head uplift
And wounded eyes that looked at me
I like this.
I cannot say for sure that you are real; too many times before you stole away into the night. If I should dream, or knead, I cannot say.

A nurse must always be where shadows play strange tricks within a lighted room and steal your mind. I wish you would be real someday!

This hand upon my pulse is good to feel; but many times before you stole away, and whether your clear eyes are truly real, I cannot say.
Lines to a Heart Too Soon

My traitor heart, too many times
You beat a time
Of hope that seared my brain
And died too soon.

My black, black heart, you
Throbbed a song
Of living dust,
And I raised a burden in my soul
Then, left a crust.

My foolish heart, perhaps you too
Have been a youth,
And blindly beat your bars
When love was gone?

Exposé (Cont.)

A man will never know
A fool one guides his foolish feet;
Nothing he ever see the daze fades smile
When women meet.
To a Ditch Digger

[thanks]

"The upper crust!" you sneer,
Then swinging your pick aloft and down
And splint the frozen earth like some
Poor head that bears a crown.

"Aristocrat!" you spat,
And red drops flowed down your olive face.
I sighed, once I, beloved, was well and strong,
And left the place.

you stagger'd at five o'clock,
And supped on wine and wholesome

While you were warm and fast asleep,
I walked this street, my friend,
The Tragedy

Slowly, the wind sifts through the night, sighing gently as it parts the heavy tropical leaves.

Then, thoughtfully, pausing a moment to catch the tender arms of a white girl who burns beneath the foreign moon, it shoulders its pack of scents and glides across the coral beach to still the call of a lone guitar crying in the night.

Consolation

Somewhere before, with grace and studied care, I was unmoved. Somewhere before somewhere
Bravado

I leave the sights and sounds
I leave my love of town
No man can claim the following feel.
O woman bid them stay.
At last there comes an end to grief.
There falls in time the final leaf
From woos's gnarled tree. Since love was long

Today, I go away
I fly the way that was myself;
I take the woman's pack
To drown the color of your eyes
I pluck the sweet allion.
Then, with the smile of a circus clown
I leave the scene; I quit the town
And chant that London bridge is down

lest you should breathe, 'Come back'
"What is an Indian?" the small boy asks. You take a coin and show the child The face the Great White Father printed there. "This is an Indian," you say. Outside your window through the reeds, and on the plains the thunder of the buffalo can be heard on any Sunday afternoon. "How did he die?" persists the boy. "Disease and rats and white men's guns. Were swifter than the red man's arrows," you gravely say. (Outside your window the Conservation Corps are trimming the lovely trees.) "Did he have to die?" the small boy asks. And then you'll say — what will you say?
Theme

My love will never ask
While yours has flown;
A love that questions why and
I have not known.

My love will never beg
A final song
Your melody will not be still
Too very long.

My love will never sound
A poignant cry.
And winds will sift the sands
Much more than I.

The Miser

Forgive
My love of gold
That softly burns and gleams.
In sun dark wind and night
I watch
your hair.
Poetry

My feet go swiftly down the street
In time to words that dance and sing
Oh singing words that steal my breath,
Be mine, be mine forever more
It's cool beneath the trees
Where lilies slow the breeze,
And I would stay with thee;
But I must rise, the closing door.

Along the way my old friends stare
O'er clock the time in their faces.
Beneath their summer hats the girls
Have eyes that soften when they see
The lilted words flow by
With dreams in their hearts they fly.
While down the street I pass I
To catch the song that modulates me.

#

Punishment

Oh weep
And pace the floor
With fury in your eyes;
But never still this crime my heart
Davies.
Forget her words and go to sleep,
But out that light and lock no more.
No need to run your fingers through your hair
And stride about the floor.
No need to stride about the floor,
An old man tells you so,
Come hear his words and get yourself to bed.
To sleep on what you know.
But out that light; no need to brood, my son,
Since dawn will bring another sight.
And girls have hearts like weather waves.
Come now, just out that light.
Credo For A Physician

I do not work alone for there is One
Whose scalpel hand is finer than
my own
And he is ever there to say, "My son,
you doctors never do your finest work
alone.
Although you work behind your
somber walls,
Or treat by lamplight on some
lonely way,
I too am there. For there are
many calls.
The Chief Physician (smokes) answers
night and day.
Work well, my son; use all the
skill of men,
And walk your way in peace
with quiet eyes.
For there is One who will not
foil you when
your soul is sick and your weary
spirit cries.
I do not work alone in my vocation
For there is ever God for Consultation.
Seventeen

How could
you have wise eyes,
The scarlet lips of Eve,
And be a wide-eyed child who kissed
And went?
#

Desolate

"Be strong,"
They sternly said,
"A girl is just a girl."
What is a cancer when you have your health?
#

The Princess

The snow
Wore well his look,
His pure white robe that falls
With careful grace across life's cold

Dark heart
#
Dedication

A man
Who cannot still
The wave of Time.

I shall not wear
A Schaeic song
To dwell in somber
The lasting thought
Up the gems where
I still walk amongst
My heart.

A Medallion of Love
Before they were cold upon.
And it had all, lockthoband
Alone.

#
The Eaves are full of the Crying
(Spirit...N.Y. Herald-Tribune...)
He does not need you now that wine
and bread
Are not as dear to him as they
were then.
He does not need you now. Young
Chatterton is dead.
My Cautious world, you do not
love young men
Who work, and dream, and feed
a little flame.
Unless, of course, it whips them
into fame.

Your gates may be flung back
Someone said right
When great men bend before
the driving snow,
And there may be your St. Ruth
And Candlelight,
But Chatterton is gone and will
not know.
To slumber your well-born shoulders
listlessly
And ask about a wild bird's
pedigree.
He does not need you now, he is severe
And does not ask if you are flesh or stone,
O why you crushed his heart at seventeen.
Be still; in death the dead are dead alone.
Now futile world, to bless the printed page
And always thrilled to an empty stage.
Vanquished
your wistful face outlined against the sky
Awakened something I had left to die.

The white white moon and I once met in strife
And with a smile I watched die ebbing life.
your tender glance upon the dying moon

N. in my heart.
Blea

When Lounger tore my soul
I did not find a well too high
To scale, nor did I beg the
A prayer could not buy.

I did not ask your love
By proudly telling in the day
I stole by night. "A thief?"
And sadly turned away.

High on a cross a thief
Worn by lash and anguish,
Repented from a single glance
"This day... in Paradise."
(Cyde)

Around the globe the lone fish swims
attired in scales of golden sky.
If he should learn there is
doubt
The fish would die.

A caged bird sings as sweetly
as
A wild bird free of wing.
As long as there are.
joys
A bird will sing.

My masters of the great machines
of the scientists possess
I see I see the atrophy
Of workmen’s hands.
Career

What can I say to you, dear girl,
When romance sets your heart at night,
And you would follow where your soul doth thirsts to be in clear daylight?
What words are there to say?

If sick men need your lovely hand
If God has need of praying men
If starlight draws your troubled eyes
And restless men have need of

No one can point the way.

Iron
On Taking Up Housekeeping

My landlord thinks me a stupid man
Because I did not enquire more closely
About the bath, and lights,
And walls.

I viewed the house;
But I just smiled and
fix the roof
And say nothing about the
grey squirrel
Who lives in the great oak tree,
Lest he should raise the rent.
Can lay the temple low,
And slowly through the ashes then
The sad-eyed vestals go.
yet man who does not hold
The siren song the best
Can pluck the throbbing strings
and hear
Great music fill his breast

The Wanderer
(Animer & song)

Do not envy me,
Or coin romantic names,
Or sing of carefree woods,
But weep that I recall a thousand
And no wise calls me friend.
Secret Thought

These sleek and slender girls it seems are perfect things that drift in dreams
With haunting eyes and lacquered nails.
The very thing for Blake Males; yet all perfection is I think a taste from which most wise men shrink.

When beauty dons her lovely clothes, her smartest gown and sheerest hose
Not one rich garment that I see
Would raise a brow in chic Paris;
But while she degrades one eye a likely girl could bake a pie.

I think some day when I shall be
A guest at some exclusive tea
that I shall say I have a pain
And hurry to an up-state train
they may all think I took
But I shall have a Country wife
#

Foreboding (Teitlor's song)
I saw a hundred idle men
With misty eyes in their gaunt faces,
I saw a hundred idle men
Who watched one shave to their places.
Oh, workmen sweat and workmen raise the pillars of their lands.
What glory will our nation build with men of clefted hands?

Why waste of the great machine,
A wrench can take your gods apart,
Since you are cast in their cold steel.
Let wheels replace your useless heart.
Oh, man can lift and whitenend the greatest swift invention.
But workmen pray and no one knows a frankenstein's intention.
#
Purpose

In this great scientific age when man builds winged planes that shame the albatross
And spinning hawks, when engineers
Can you
A cataract a fandango could not cross
I shaped my little fragments one
That they might touch your hand when they were done.

Just see the Persian turquoise
Come to rest
In your soft eyes! And watch the
Ruby glow
To that worm rhythm in your breast!
Just watch the logic log off when
Their white reflection in the
Dark-blue mist!

And there, dear heart, is where
Your eyes were kissed.

Enough, enough of this—it's time
Your mouth were kissed.
Thus, one by one these fragments met my gaze.
As slowly as a cavernous crystal grows,
And though I ply an art of older days
When wrought less in their slow age I know.
I shall not care that others' great works stood
So proudly if my own are in your head.
Night Nurse

"No heart" you say
Because I do not show
Wet eyes that he is gone...
I watched the little glow
That was your son
And wept before his pain undone.

If Michael's pen could
Could tell the depths of pain
These cols have known.
Strange Vigil

I do not know just why I stand
on guard
Before the entrance of my secret shrine.
As surely as the soul outlives the body
No mortal man will give the counter-sign.
And when these outworn armor falls
When no one guards the way I stand
Before,
And when the scowland water both are dust
There will remain no priest, no
Guarded door.
It is quite strange to wait so long
To watch the village lights where
Good men live,
To catch the faintest trace of
A lovely song,
And stay to see a sign that will give.
As long as life is long and dreams are bright
A shrine must have a priest and
Vigil light.
Epide

"see here and here, he did not love our hills,
Our stern but just New England code and laws.
My neighbors say around their stoves at night.
"But his parents tilled the soil for many years,
But he has gone to cities where the folk sing songs at night and sleep until high noon.
We never harmed the lad though things he said were soft and strange to all but women folk.
We never harmed the lad and yet he went
Without a backward glance at our white hills.
He knew so well.

When warm lips turned to ice
Bewildered men have never asked, "What kiss is this?"
Exile (cont.)
But with a voiceless pain have
such men have never cried that
white white snow
became the Pharisee’s disguise
to cloak
a shrivelled heart. Bewildered men
love still
the beauty of the snow, but they
recall too well, that it is cold, is cold.

# For failure
I mind the most
not faults or back-tuned friends:
but dreams that will not fade or have
an end.

Isa. 1:30
It is not God
to have a falling star,
and then forget the dream that leads
a far.

#
Portrait. The Automobile Manufacturer

There is a mechanical genius who owns great factories
Where thousands of men spend one third of their lives
Turning nuts, welding, greasing, and painting
Smooth machines that will just like cats.
It is his boast that in his large factories
The men, whose every third minute he has purchased,
Will sire one machine a minute.

The world says that this is good and this man is best;
But observe the great man's eyes
When he is looking at some labor-wrought work
Some spinning wheel, windmill,
And his eyes will not be those
Of a conqueror
Who views the relics of an age he
A horse who crops grass in a little used pasture.
No, you will see the look of a wondering boy.
Who pondered what mischief he had done.
To a Probation.
There will be roses and little lamps for star
And clear water silvered fights again.
There will be music in the night,
thought you are living in the land of Countegame.
There will be love and the dream of a dream.
While your small hands will smooth a sheet
And turn a fevered pillow or walk
With chestoned little feet.
(over)
To A Probationer (Cont.)

There will be beauty in that room
More than this poor song disclosed
And in your eyes clear stars will show,
And in your cheeks the rose.

Dreams (anthology (Poe))

My homesick ships with plaintive
Of dreams that will not perish or die
My cross-lashed wings so downward fall,
Some day we said.

Reflection

This grey morning as I brushed my hair
I thought this a cruel thing
That a sturdy tree should shed
its leaves
In the last full flush of spring.
The Printer Of Poems
(Cycle)

To sing eternally, a poet's songs are set like ink-stained fingers like my own

Moving in rhythm to a heart that longs to have the sacrament it has not known

While all the fountains of loneliness lid still

Within the fountains of type I know so well, My eager hand must serve another's will

And bring the song the poet's letters spell. But always after this the press shall start To sing in silkest joy and ask above The rebel voice within my workman's heart

"But who is it receives your days one's loss And as my flying fingers feed the press It sings of the old sins the loneliness..."

++
A lallid monk who could not sleep
Wha could not laugh and could not weep
Arose, and in his sandals crept
To where the roses slept,
And gathered armful in the night
To place before the weigh light.

In some rich garden of a king
There dwelt a lovely, scarlet thing
Who lived among the scented roses
And spent her love on knights.
The king was busy with his wars
And gold
Until the rose was seen and dead.

There reigned a rose so bold and white
A soldier saw it in the night,
And built a wall so man could scale
To touch its petals pale
And then the starkest man of all
The rose that troubled these un-sought.
Oh, Gardener of lost loveliness,
Who still can unfold and kiss
Perhaps you smile on us pale men
Who make wax flowers then,
And send our idle wreaths of song
To share
The waste upon the desert air.

I cannot promise you the pretty
And all your heart's desire;
But I can write a song about
a girl
Who dreams beside a fire.

I have no gold to buy the lovely
Silk and silver things
That you all girls miss;
But we can share the morn
Flow we'll make
Before the goodnight kiss.
Thinkers have spoken to me and some of them were cynical. They have laughed at love and the immortality of the soul. They have explained our love as animal magnetism. And have said that when we die it is all over. That this sweet bond is ended when we are dead.

I have listened to them as a young man listens to sages. With dotted breath I have listened to wise men tell of the whispering marsh that spun from the setting sun to form the earth turning slowly on its axis. While a sheet of ice moved down from the glacial regions, filling the valleys and rivers and leveling mountains.

It was all so majestic that I felt like a little man, Beethoven, who suddenly finds himself walking on a large planet.
I am not a man of science, dear, and I cannot resolve all things. That beset the frail and human heart.

A lie a lie, but as I knew that nothing is as lovely as love and you,

And that your eyes are kept in beauty, that nothing can be destroyed, that this book of verse can be reduced to smoke and ashes; but that the smoke and ashes will be caught by the trees and soil and live.

I know that the oil that moves a ship and fills a lamp once was a salve to toothaches, a dinosaur, and long dead loves that returned to the earth thousands of years ago.

And I know that nothing can destroy a sheaf of poems, your eyes and hair, I know that there is nothing life or death can do to love.
1937

Fall Hallant

A vine with red, rough hoods
But love of flower's faint perfume
Passeth this tattered cloaks
The summer's last small bloom.

Primrose Philosophy

So you weep because it is raining
And there will be no picnic today
So the sun is lified smiling
All the time.

Boast (Coral Gables Riviera)

you may guard your gates by
day and night,
And burn the drawbridge too.
And lock and chain your iron doors
Like knaves do.

you may light white candles so
shine
And kneel down like a dove,
Yet I shall set your home aflame
I am love.
1938

My tattered home, I thought of

One day while I was young and

wondering,

"I heard that you are rich," I said

and held my breath until he

sadly spoke,

"Sometimes the rich are poor, my

solemn son,

and we are sad to love so much,

for one he loses a father gives

so more

than just a little but one love,

one truth."

I did not mind my poverty

My one joy: song, drizzle

The night I passed the well-

kelp

grounds and house

Where mistful once I heard my

father's song,

"No more than just a little

Oiled, one love,

one truth."
1938

Epilogue: Blue Eyes

Of all the girls on earth you want to know
The reason why I ask to marry you
Because on rainy days I want to see
The way the sky appeared when it was blue.

The Mirror (Cycle)

All through the winding streets I go
In search of love I do not know.
There is no clue until I pass
The looking glass.

I seek him in the dim churchlight,
Beneath the wood-glimmer stars
But only through the looking glass
His features go.

Not where the forest's smallwoods
Or where the sod-eyed poets go
Is there the faintest sight or trace
Of that strange face.
I see for just a moment in the
Looking glass
The shadow of the soul and then I
Too
I could not share the foundry's
Grief that a little Jim was dead.
I know he works somewhere up
There with stars about his head
Poet's Prayer
Oh Lord, I do not ask to be the flower
That turns the thoughts of night to day;
But let me go ahead the darkest
Years of years
To light the shadows on the way.
AFTER COUNTING TEN

I did not want to utter angry words
To scatter them about your fields,
My friend,
Like poisoned grain to end the
Song of birds
And in the desolation gain my ends;
But I would set them down upon
A sheet
That you might take them in your
Steady hand
Like some exotic city girl the wheat,
The soul and sacrament of our good land.
You did not like the aged poet's verse
Just from the tenement and mean
Street stripes;
But more, you did not like the city's
Curse
The marks upon his face of that sad
Life.
You saw each line that told where
Sin began;
I saw the resurrection of a man.
LEGACY TO MY SON

If someday I should have a son to leave
My name, and little more, these words would tell
The boy the simple creed that I believe
Would be an honest legacy as well.
Your father being young and poor, and lean,
With nothing but a pen and loveliness
Would have you, mental son he has not seen

Be wary of the trap of easy life.
The only happiness that he has known
He did not buy or steal from any store
And evil seed and good that he has sown,
However deep, has always brought him more.

Be scornful of the watchmen of the wealth,
Be true, be brave, be careful of your health.

#
YOU LITTLE WINDS
Santa Fe Examiner (Nov. 1938)
As long as people read the simple words
Of poets, then let these lines tell
Of once when art and justice wept
unheard
With genius in the Nazi cell,
And of the lands where man
became a clod
To feed the ego of the scourge of God
#
Rise up you little winds of righteous
thought
And carry these words far away—
There is a tale that men are telling
still
Of when Attila's Huns held sway
And of the barren years when
Tyrant's spears
And tyrant's flame laid waste a
Thousand years.
#
God knows a careless hand can
spoil the work
Of scientist and human lark,
And that a demagogue and his war
lords
Can turn the whole world dark.
Ah, little winds asleep upon the plains
Are even you afraid of Nazi chains?

ENDEAVOR
"A rolling stone gathers no moss,"
says friends.
With their rich goods and years all laid away.
Despite my flattened purse I feel no loss.
And any way who wants to gather moss?
Captive

I see (encha)ined a dog with one firm stake
Which fastens him secure upon a lawn
The way men pin the butterflies
Wood and yield they take
From sweet and fragrant fields
When morning when dew is gone.
In spirit I am one with this poor hound, ...
A man tied by his gate tone small plot
Who wears the grass away for fields unfound.
And so I comfort him for our sad lot.

But when I pass the bend in our long small lane
And come in sight of home, another
A large free shepherd dog, will race again
To me as swift as wind as straight as sun
And his great eyes as soft as April rains
Will say, "One tie can make more slaves than chains."
THE CIGARETTE GIRL

Her eyes and skin remind me of a rose
Beneath an air-conditioned case of glass,
I recognize the old-time perfect pose
She had at school, and do not let her pass.

"What brings you here?" she asks
without surprise,
As though she saw me just the other night;
But I can see the lie in her wide eyes
And in the way the roses turn to white.

"You had a voice; you used to want to sing,"
I say and see too late the hard words break
The glass and reach the fragile thing
That grew so sweetly for illusion's sake.

She said, "Are you a famous poet yet?
Are you—or what do you do to forget"
CONVERSATION IN A NORTH END CAFE

"This guy's safe all right, Antonio; I know him, see; he's not a cop or stool. He came in here to eat, so let him go. You'd never understand this kind of fool. Thanks, guys, I'll make it right with you—next year...

Are you, O.K.? Still want to eat spaghetti? You mind if I sit down and have a beer?

And you have one—on me—I'm not broke yet.

Oh, kid, forget that stuff—I know you, see: You write the stuff that always bounces back.

And ain't ashamed to speak to girls like me...

Look, kid, go home; you're on a wrong-way track...

I'm drunk, I guess, or maybe if I had A brother he would look like Galahad.
1939

**JOCKEY CLUB**

In here the whim of fate, or gamblers plan,
Can make the meanest merchant wolf or clown;
But in the end, no matter how they say,
The better work, the owner take the town.

I know all this and still I lay my stake
On Pegasus who ran so well abroad,
While no one wants the horse, if he should wake,
And stop his listless pawing of the sod...

What odds to win... I know he has the heart,
The speed, the class: I know his record well...
They say he lets them down at every start;
But this is once the sleeper rings the bell.
As always, in the stretch my glad heart sings—
What blooded field can beat a horse with wings?
1939

Two things I would not think:
That you could diger love could pass;
But now in black you celebrate
Love's requiem mass.
The mourning tears are shed,
The stone is set, the sighs are
If I am right, not love;
But I have died.

Ownership (Westminster)
No man has ever owned a plot of land
Despite his deeds and legal scraps,
The patient earth eludes the greedy hand
And lets time rot its careful maps.

The earth owns him instead and calmly
waits
Until his little bags of minutes burst
To spill across the ground his feeble
dates
And guruch at last his dusty thirst.
THE FLAME
The flame I tend; a hungry wolf has drawn
Its too scant cloak of gray around its throat,
And waits. I had this whelp since it was born;
I held it close and heard its first
sharp note,
And now it lies upon the hearth to wait,
Red eyes, half, but still all set to spring
At food with hot, red mouth never too late
To close on all a friendly hand may bring.

I recall now the prideful Spartan lad
Who hid the stolen fox beneath
his blouse
And was devoured to keep the code he had;
So I deny what I keep in my house.
One day in answer to the primal law
The starving wolf will turn that hungry jaw.

#
The Commission

The angry words have burned and dropped black snow
Upon the huddled tenements and men whose flakes
Of soot are shameful marks by which all know

How very blessed is the one who takes.
He has no words to meet the fall of black
That stains the one who eats the public bread,
Or rests his aching malnourished back

To wonder why the lashing words were said...

"This public waste... the circuses and bread... The debt
Of all our lovely coins... and who's to pay?...

My mill will close until the deficit is met.

Today I heard a fellow-worker say,
"You tell them, son, you're not a silent fool;
You know the time; you've been to school."

When we are working in the city streets
In all that dust and fevered sound
I can forget that tugging at my pulse
That artery by which my heart is bound,
But all I salvaged from my counted days
Comes back when smoothing farm to market ways.
Then trail-wise I set snares to amaze
And trap the peace I have not found.

Philosophy
I like to think that God made me from earth
And return back to earth I must.
That on some distant day a bloom may spring
Up from my pinch of dust.
The Flood

The bitter tears of all the heartbreak years
Held back until they could no more
And filled the valley of the Merrimack
Above my kitchen door.

I always told the upstream unemployed
Their tears would meet a wide detour;
The rich men build their homes upon the hills
And look down on the poor.

What divine fun they must have had that day
To see the valley all afloat
And all the homeless boys and girls, for once,
Go sailing in a boat.

Because they needed hands to stem the flood
I "made" the legion of the lost.
And wonder still who could have done my work
At half my labor cost.
Elegy
(Coral Gables Riviera)
Let there be sorrow in the land of birds
And in their world let all song end.
For man who hoards above his share of grain
Is not a song bird’s friend.
Let music cease and let the waiting worm
Work unmolested in the grain.
So fly away until they want
The song birds back again.
Some day a robot with his gears awry
May hate his ordered world and say
“I sometimes miss the good old days
Before man died away.”
#
Goodbye
One moment as I pause within the golden light
Before I close the door
And fold the windowed coins within the purse of night
To store against the unbefriended pilgrim’s plight
Let me say it once more.
FLORIDA (Lily Lawrence Brow's)
I surely know the God who made our land
Knew men grew sick of what they bought and sold
And so he made a magic tropic strand
For those who would not let their souls grow old.
The message came to Ponce de Leon
That all men gained of heaven here on earth.
Was this, and then he knew he must be on
His way to find the fountain of rebirth.
That sweu song still shivers in the glow
Of tropic leaves that sing the sweet tune
Of all the happiness that man can know.
While nations burn beneath the blood-red moon
On all four sides but one the ocean lies
Around this one way road to Paradise.

AUTOGRAH
These years I lived with you
Are still a lighted stage
Where drama that we knew
Outlives its little age.
To A. Grapefruit

May those who find my heart-made songs
Upon a dusty shelf
Be glad as I was glad
Myself
The day I walked a bright Miami street
And found your universe beneath my feet.

May hands that open up my heart
Before they hurry by
Be gentle with their touch
As I
And may the arteries of song then be
As much a source of life as you to me.

What though the critics page
And say the play won't do?
The years I lived with you
Are still a lighted stage.

Man's deeds are all too few
To fill a single page
And all my fingers drew
Were this, my labor's wage,
"The years I lived with you"
Are still a lighted stage.
Compensation
Because there is:
No fourth strike to a ball player
who struck out
with all the bases filled;
No turning back the prison days
for a prisoner
Found innocent after five years;
No other chance for a man whose
health
Was sold to industry for too few
loaves of bread
And the little jingle of copper
pennies in his pockets
No complete return for the woman
who believed in the wrong way
No refund in the Cut Throat
Department Store of Life
We have the solace of poetry.
#

Sweet Compulsion
I go today because my heart would be
the earth
That gives its loveliness and fruits away.
Because my heart is all that I am worth
I go today
Poems year by year

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<tr>
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At some far time I hope that you will say
"And once I knew a man of lowly birth
Who left a land because he wished to stay
Who left a home because he loved its hearth
Say this and put the blame upon the fay
Who tells such things to idlers on the sward
I go today.
#

Hear ye, hear ye, who dwell in land
Of sleet and snow
Not in an ice-bound land was
Christmas long ago
And nothing broke that hushed calm
But rustle of a tropic palm
The same that whispers to the spirit mild
This is the birthday of the Blessed Child.
The long wet fingers of the night unloosed
The tangled threads of all the slighted years
With such insistent care I leave the house
A target for the rain's swift spears.
(On nights like these, but oh so long ago
I hurried by these dim-lit streets
with books)
My coat protected from the rain and snow
And reached my home as eager as I was
to go.)

My mind tells me the time I passed this way
Was not last night or last year's night,
But in the falling of the same wet
That cannot reach the streetlamp's
golden light
I cannot see I was so long so long
away.
That wars were fought since then
and maps were changed
After I fretted at the lagging day
And stored within my mind the
things to say.
I know the way to climb the winding stairs
Up three long flights to where a poet lives
And when I reach the door I knock my knock
And listen to the empty sound it gives.
I know his unlocked door, his trustful sigh
That what he has no thief will want.
I do not know the why we spilt the wine,
Or how, but know at last the fault was mine.