



VERSE OLD AND NEW

What My Life is Like.

My life is like the shattered wreck,
Cast by the waves upon the shore;
The broken mast, the riven deck,
The hull of the shipwreck that is o'er,
Yet from the ruins of the storm
The murcher his raft will form
Again to tempt the faithless sea;
But hope rebuilds no barque for me.

My life is like the blighted oak,
That lifts its stem and withered form,
Scathed by the lightning's sudden stroke,
Steady to meet the coming storm.
Yet round that sapless trunk will twine
The curling tendrils of the vine;
And life and freshness there impart,
Not to the passion-blighted heart.

My life is like the desert rock,
In the midocean, lone and drear,
Worn by the wild waves' ceaseless shock
That pound its base their surges rear.
Yet there the sea-moss still will cling,
Some flower will find a cleft to spring;
And breathe 'em there a sweet perfume;
For no life's flowers no more will bloom.

My life is like the desert waste,
By human footsteps seldom pressed;
The eye no freshness there can trace;
No verdant spot on which to rest.
Yet 'em among these sands so drear
The stork will tend her young with care—
E'en there the notes of joy impart,
But naught can cheer my lonely heart.

—Robert Emmett Hoce.



They Never Return.

Umbrellas strayed from clubland's halls
Come back, though not in silk;
The man who goeth out to balls
Returneth with the milk.
The swallows come again with spring,
That fit when summer's spent;
But all the seasons fail to bring
Me back the books I lent.

My senses strayed when Gella smiled,
Because her eyes were black,
But now no more by love beguiled,
I've got them safely back.
My heart I gave returned to me
As lightly as it went;
E'en hopes long lost once more I see,
But not the books I lent.

All things return; in twilight gray
I lay down to dawn anew;
The leaf that's bent below to-day
Will make to-morrow's stew;
The hill collector cometh back
—With covetous intent.
All things return—except, alack!
The books that I have lent.

They stood in "Rusala" side by side,
They filled one rosewood shelf;
They're now belonging, far and wide,
To any but myself.
Oh, take my word, this world of pain
Will die out and end
Before you'll ever see again
The books—the you lent.

—Booklover's Verse.



Fortune's Failures.

Some say the gods are fickle. Not at all!
Hast'ner within the workshop's shaded wall
Wrought what seemed good and puffed their dust
Yet seen in midday glare 'twas mean and small?

Oh! I, in walking through the market-
place,
Have happened, unexpected, face to face
With some unworthy bit of mine own craft,
And cinged beneath its failure and dis-
grace!

And, with a feeling of disgust and shame,
Have sought and tossed it back into the
flame,
That none might know how fully could I
fall.
May our Creator never feel the same?

ETHELLEYN BREWER DE FOR.



Inter Sodales.

Over a pipe the Angel of Conversation
Loosens with glee the lassels of his
pipe,
And, in a fine spiritual exaltation,
Hastens, a rosy, spendthrift, to disburse
The cube-rooted of imagination,
As suitable a delicate antiphrasis
Informs our thought, and garnet we re-
laxate.
The sweet old faces of mutual admiration
Over a pipe,
Heard in this home's delicious divagation,
How soft the song; the epigram how
 terse!
With what a genius for administration
We rearrange the smoking apparatus,
And map the course of man's regeneration
Over a pipe.

—M. E. Hanley.

At the Bargain Sales.

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through a bargain sale there passed
A maid, who'd lingered till the last,
Just shopping.

Her mien was sad, her face looked worn;
Her hat was crushed, her dress was torn.
She'd jostled there since early morn,
Just shopping.

"Oh, stay," the salesgirl said, "and see
This lovely silk at four-and-three
A yard." She answered, "None for me,
I'm shopping."

At six o'clock, as homeward went
The saleswoman, on pleasure bent,
They left her there by accident,
Still shopping.

A watchman making late, his sound,
Was scared by an unwanted sound;
On the third floor the maid he found,
Just shopping.

There, in the twilight, cold and gray,
Sawest the maid, who'd shopped all day,
And nothing bought to take away—
Still shopping.

—Old Scrap-Book.

The Vampire City.

Come with me into Babylon! Here to my
woodland seat
Over the miles she hugs and smiles—the
smile of the bitter-sweet.
I hear the distant cadence, the strenuous
she sings;
I smell the incense burning where her
great red censor swings.

Out of the night she calls me, the night
that is her day;
I see the gleam of her million lights a
thousand miles away;
As the roar of a mighty army I hear her
pulses beat.
With the tramp of the restless vandals, the
rush of the wearied feet.

Ever and ever onward a white procession
goes;
Youths with the strength of lions, maids
with the breath of the rose—
Toward her, but never from her, throned
on her armour'd legs;
They give her their lives for homage, but
the City only smiles.

They know that her breasts are poison;
They know that her lips are lies,
And half revealed is the death concealed
in the pools of her occult eyes;
Yet still she is calling ever, and echo is
never dumb;
Follow us into Babylon! Mistress of Life,
we come!

—Reginald Wright Kaufman.

A Change of Subject.

We took an auto ride one day,
My lover bold and I,
And swiftly o'er the country roads
We joyfully did fly.

I'd no idea machines would let
One sentimental be—
You should have heard the things Tom
said!
Sub rosa then to me!

The air was sweet with country scents;
It was a glorious ride—
Then—miles from help, the motor stop-
ped—
Some trouble underside.

I'd no idea machines would make
A man such passion feel,
But, oh, you should have heard the things
Tom said sub automobile!

To My Cat.

Half-lying kindness, and half-distantly,
Thou comest to my call serenely so,
With tumbling speech and gracious ges-
tures grave.

In salutation softly and urbanely:
Yet must I mutter to me thy grave to gain—
For whies may win thee, but no acts
enslave.

And nowhere glidly thou shalt save
Where thought disturbs the concert of thy
reign.

Sphinx of my quiet heart! who deignst to
dwell,
Friend of my toil, companion of mine
ease,
Thine is the lore of Ha and Ramenest!
That not forget dost that remember well,
Behelien still in blinking reveries,
With somber sea-green gaze inscrutable.

—Graham R. Tomson.

The Wise Man's Almanac.

They ain't no sense, as I kin see,
In mortals, such as you an' me,
A-faulting Nature's wise intents,
An' lookin' back with providence.
It ain't no use to gamble an' complain;
It's just as cheap an' easy to rejoice;
When God sorts out the weather an' sends
rain.

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