

Selected Poetry

The Solitary

Let them think I love them more than I do,
Let them think I care, though I go alone,
If it lifts their pride, what is it to me
Who am self-complete as a flower or a stone?

It is one to me that they come or go
If I have myself and the drive of my will,
And strength to climb on a summer night
And watch the stars swarm over the hill.

My heart has grown rich with the passing of years
I have less need now than when I was young
To share myself with every comer,
Or shape my thoughts into words with my tongue.
—SARAH TEASDALE, in the *Yale Review*.

Sea-Daring

I sometimes see myself as divers do
A drowned man dimly lying under swift
Shoal-hurried waters where the rollers lift
Their league-borne burthens of the marbled blue.
Shy rieviers mark his doom-bed for the clue
Of laggard flotsam, in their heartless thrift
Untroubled by the roaring tempest-drift
That to his sail the daft sea-darer drew.

Yet out I steer where the green eddy writhes
About the bell-buoy and the sea-gulls hoarse
Cut the ribbed cloud with their two-bladed scythes,
And still must on (so hard my passion whips)
Till sudden shipwreck stay my headlong course
And I am wolfish, and too lean for praise.
—WILFRID THORLEY, in the *English Review*.

Summer Rain

I—who have tried to learn
How I could find
Everywhere marks of her
Spirit and mind; ...
How she is mingled with
Earth, to the water kith,
How the bright sparks of her
Fly on the wind—

Saw her, where wet leaves sway
Under the breeze,
Fall with the faltering
Light through the trees;
Fall where wild grasses lift
Flowers like skies adrift—
Touching and altering
All the eye sees.

Through the drenched undergrowth
Solitude brings
Silence's lyrical
Quivering strings.
Here where no footsteps stir
Solitude sings of her;
Silence—a miracle!—
Sings of her, sings.

Thrilled in the distance
The note of a bird
Faintly—a lonely sound!
Was it her word
Cried in the rain-washed wood?
Deep in the grass I stood,
Hoarding the only sound
That my heart heard.

—THEODORE MAYNARD, in the *New Witness*.

Lucrezia Borgia's Last Letter

Before me shine the words of her last letter—
Lucrezia Borgia to the Pope of Rome —
Wherein she begs, as life's remaining fether
Slips from her, that his prayers will guide her home.

*The favor God has shown to me confessing,
As swift my end approaches, Father, I,
A Christian tho a sinner, ask your blessing
And kiss your feet in all humility.*

*The thought of death brings no regret, but pleasure;
And after the last Sacrament great peace
Will be mine own—in overflowing measure,
If but your mercy marks my soul's release.*

And here the letter finds a sudden ending,
As tho the dying hand had lost its power:
My children to Rome's love and care commending—
Ferrara—Friday—at the fourteenth hour.
—ANTOINETTE DECOURSEY PATTERSON, in the *Literary Digest*.

Instruction

My hands that guide a needle
In their turn are led
Relentlessly and deftly,
As a needle leads a thread.

Other hands are teaching
My needle; when I sew
I feel the cool, thin fingers
Of hands I do not know.

They urge my needle onward,
They smooth my seams, until
The worry of my stitches
Smothers in their skill.

All the tired women,
Who sewed their lives away,
Speak in my deft fingers
As I sew to-day.
—HAZEL HALL, in *Current Opinion*.

The Home-Keepers

A little dream keeps house with me—
Outside, the surge and flow
Of city throngs, of wind, of sea—
The world the great ones know.

But we—we wash the cups and spoons
And make the copper shine,
And knit, on sunny afternoons,
Beside the trumpet-vine.

We smile at many a secret joke;
We weed the lettuce-bed;
We sweep the hearth, and pause to stroke
The snow-white kitten's head.

The neighbors hear our songs, and say,
"How queer some folks can be!"
They wonder what can keep us gay,
My little dream and me.

But I am wise, and therefore know,
For sewing up a seam
Or keeping cupboard shelves just so,
There's nothing like a dream!

—HELEN COWLES LE CRON, in *Contemporary Verse*.



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