



POEMS

BY

JOHN HEWITT

NOVEMBER 1982

X

When I am sixty years am grey
I will declare my holiday,
give over driving of my pen
learn the fence and praise of men,
and turn my face from their abodes
to friendly hills and lazy roads,
and live in the beatitude
of mountain crag and windbare wood,
and ease my eyes, grown weak and dull,
with daybreaks fierce and beautiful
and for the wisdom of my bones
alternately lie a straw and stones,
and for the comfort of my heart
watch even once the Hawthorn start,
and bathe me in the energies
that spire from rocks and ponds and trees.

✓

X

6th

I stood upon a hill, gazed long on trees
red as the mackerel, pied with jag and scratch
for half a minute's joy of blackberries,
leant on a gate, and gave a man a match,

with ripe words praised his dog & heard her story
her pedigree and how she nearly won
content in the rich year's declining glory
and wise with two hours living in the sun -

6th.

So I must year by year lose touch with men,
an exile in the waters of my thought...
and when the golden trumpet calls again
without me shall the fight I dreamt be fought.

And when ^{girls} boys sing up down the bannered street
bring news that now at last the west's awake,
or men beat doors to shelter from defeat
no stone will stir the surface of my lake.

X

When I am with sixty years am grey
I will declare my holiday,
give over driving of my pen
leave the fence and praise of men,
and turn my face from their abodes
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of mountain crag and windbare wood,
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that spire from rocks and ponds and trees.

✓

X
I stood upon a hill, gazing long on trees
red as the boccon, laid with jag and scratch
for half a minutes joy of blackberries,
leant on a gate, and gave a man a match,

with ripe words praised his dog & heard her story
her pedigree and how she nearly won
content in the rich year's declining glory
and wise with two loves living in the sun -

6th

6th.
So I must year by year lose touch with men,
an exile in the waters of my thought...
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without me shall the fight I dreamed be fought.

And when ^{girls} boys singing down the bannered street
bring news that now at last the west is awake,
or men beat doors to shelter from repeat
no stone will stir the surface of my lake.

X Clay and Stone. 7/15

I choose for walking clay instead of stone,
for friendly leaves that whisper in the wind
or gave my riding shelter in a shower,
still friendly, play stout Raleigh to my tread,
half glad who doubts it, to get back again
to the broad bosom of the kindly mother.

But Stone is proud, honts flint lie to my foot,
and stubbing we rebukes the restless mind.
Prody als elder brother always there,
hard hanise - my friend's the fallen leaf.

Autumn .

Autumn no more a legend to the heart
of leafed wagon, stack, and barn, and loft . . .
under the glowing sunset of the year,
and cargo warping galleon breasting full
the glistening waters of the homeward hauls:
no more the farcied ritual that persuades
winter withhold his icy fist from earth . . .
but drums that drum defeat, the anxious trouble
that packs up trappings and accessories,
prelude to consternation, fever'd trace
before the onset of the frosty legions,
the stripping of the shrine and hearth to leave
no trophies for the boisterous winds to rife .

The winter is an exile for my heart.
I mope and whimper in captivity,
in time's bare cell when only frostmates gay
the window set between me and my guard . . .

And even then as often prisoners
have wak'd to happiness when some stray bird
blundering, bawled and twist a cloud and cloud,
flaps frightened at their feet with twittering cry
bring back meadow, wired gables - trees.
So when thy years in turmoil I cram my heart
with twigs and petals of rich memory
that when a lost lark or a starving thrush
drops at my feet I'll have a rest for it.

(36-32.) Sonnet

9

8

I who to save the bruising of my mind
have tempered for my use a bitter tongue
and wear a cynic visor - now I find
men grab their hills, & keep their tense bows strung,
when I approach. So each encounter is
a nervous scrutiny, a lifted lamp
to mark my features fallen ... enemies
upon each bridge .. my path an armed camp.

Wond I have done much better had I gone
timidly thru the streets unarmed, afraid,
and shrinking from the threatened fist or stone?

Wond my bare mind perpetually betrays
has dwindled in its ardor and turned cold
as now to pinches, leaf's or sunset's gold?

1

(37-'32.) Sonnet.

815.

Are there no daemons in the upper air,
 20 (measured) circles concentric^{them to} the round,
 & bubbled cauldrons tended with old care,
 at yew trees shivering over grassbank mound^s?
 where I may get me perilous mastery?
 For if an oak may hold a dryad still
 and down lane Aphrodite from the sea
 have other witches left the lonely hill?

Shall fay and sprite and cobold disappear,
 leaving sky and earth a windy stage
 for Greek imaginations and the mere
 book learned humors of a sunny age?

And must we turn towards far Olympus, blind
 to dark and native thoughts of the mind.

X
 When ^(fledged) great events break thro' the eggshell sky
 and men put on an instant's majesty
 we joy in recognition, somehow share
 the glory that transfigures earth and air,
 become a moment part of that which seems
 woven of star dust or a weft of dreams.

But I have learned from traffic of my mind
 with times and places an intenser kind
 of ecstasy

that in a twig or stone
 sees God's heart bar, creation's very bone,
 the atom's orbit in the universe;
 and that I scan obsequious worshippers
 who mumble gray words to a wooden god,
 and call me the divine, one period
 on earth a kindly roguin ...

I adore

9th 13

spring's swift enchantment of the sycamore,
sun's dalliance on water, wind in hay,
at the rich sequence of an autumn day.
But those that their eyes to what is evil,
or postulate a hypothetical devil,
I make no cleavage, rank nor this nor that,
but hold the stone and star confederate,
call each thing in itself significant.
Get mystic rapture from a stinging plant
as one that lives on flies, as much as you
feel dragging from the rose adrift with dew.

So when one moment is more rich or grand
than'ts jostling neighbor - Trees as good as clouds,
and beetles splendid as the topmost crag
that takes the sunrise for its battle flag.

The monarchy of summer is overthrown
as we are in the troubled interval
before spring's rebel clarion is blown
and the green acres ^{burgon 1875?} answer the shrill call

Yet during the lascivious wantoning,
the arrogant and passionate display
of scented summer, often flashes a wing
recalling youth's clear losses of yesterday.

And down the long suburban avenues
that spruce contentment for his strong bold chose
we for our comfort learned into use
the crimson banners of the climbing rose

What have I lost for love?

What only laid aside?

And ~~that~~ were less enough
if loving I had died.

And as I daily die

it is a certain loss.

Not twice shall you and I

That self same water cross.

Some moments I had spent
in learning sky and earth
^{twice}
a score of seasons' discontent,

may be a death or birth.

But these are gone. What use
complaining that the stream
made never stay or brace
to mirror world dream.

A woman proud of heart.

tall, beautiful and young,

she played the proud queen's part

with no mask & mummer's tongue,

and if she'd stoof at boud

or wept, forgot her part

she had betrayd her proud

and lonely queen's high heart.

The Queen had only been

a woman by the fire

where once had stode a queen

on toping my desire.

1015

To me there was denied
the body's love and use.
^{love}
Yet I had set aside
this ~~for~~ in a willing time,
burning my eager blood
to play with mind and thought
till I had understood
what woman meant and taught.
But here I was denied
again. Virginity
lou at my wounded side
and night me on the tree.

[N.B. Ulster Folklore: Elizabeth Andrews. 1913]

Inatha de Danann & the Danes

High on a pile of broken stones,
perch'd on a barrel of pitch
I sat and smokt and spoke to a man
and pointed across the ditch,

Who was it builded the little mound?

It was the Danes: he said,
that their arms were long and their backs were strong,
they were wee and their hair was red.

The men who came in the long ships? I askt:
I thought them tall and fair?
whose wide blue eyes knew changing skies
with the wind of the stars in their hair?

He shook his head: I ha' heerd o' them.
They Larried the churches and stole.
These little men were other danes
would harm no decent soul.

1315

17

A kindly sort of folk they were
that made these coves* and mounds
and left the ailing stranger
who clanc'd upon their grounds.

The wicked woman who bate her girl,
the landlord who storn'd for his rent.
They put great frogs into their charms
for warning and punishment.

But they were just, as being just
they held to their own with care,
beir't the man wond ay the thorn
or run the round with his share.

Remember this, young man! said he,
from a old man bent and gray
It was better for the country
before they went away.

*
cove - a souterrain

X
light matches in a leadwind, do the hundred
in even time, take bowlin standing up.
split second for the hurdles,
have tingly ears from slovin in the second row,
remember the Plantagenets in order,
and what the Roman wrote about old age.
repeat the Australian team of '21:
shall these go down, spilt milk into the gutter,
when slabby boots march up the carriage drive
and be mere recollection of an exile
spitting on stoves in England, fanning slow
with pitchet blisters face in Borneo.
Or in an office totting up small figures
that prove success of England's Ten Year Plan,
under Hawk's eye of comrade from the ghetto
ready to work, beatwing, still sabotage,
if thought of yorker at the winning try,
or master's gesture thumbing Ovid over
flat shape of cypher on the misty page.

Then what the Head said when you won the Cup
will sound just like an old song in the bathroom
heard on the draughty landing of a boarding house.

{ 20th Century
June 33 }

1615

Duty shunned, signals drunk,
lamplighter misst bld alley,
or pointsman laughs w/ girl.

Already in the valley
The cottages are sunk
under white flagged whrl.

Rats gnawd dyke or prop.
none stoppt leaks' stark drop:

The men scream from bus top:
Blind man strikes wheel, goods train
Lead on roars in fogged train.

1915
21

X

November landscape of an ocean grey
with seaweed trees that move bare quiet fingers
as gentle eddies swirl about the air
while somewhere sun beat on green glittering hills
far up above the limits of the sky,
and on the seafloor noiseless creatures spoke,
but no sound spannd the distance: spring bubbles
of billowing smoke rose from their vacant mouths.

Caught in the power of tense ecstasy
my toes grippt wavemooth pebbles least I'd spring
sheer as a rocket with a train of bubbles
up to the sunsworld and the glittering hills.

19th

With hands that burn to know
her body's loveliness
and round her thighs wound so
in passionate caress:

or cup the heaving breast,
and feel the nipple rise,
while knee on knee is pressed,
and tongue learns more than eyes . . .

I, with these eager hands,
must shame-faced gaze and gaze
on beauty where she stands
and copulate in phrase.

—

20th

23

The lonely fields of my forgotten days
must blossom somewhere, put on tardy spring,
deck ditch and quarry with the whis wild blaze
or sleep beneath sun woven summer haze
regardless of shrill song and fluttered wing.

Brooks that were cool slips and wrists and feet
where sudden boulders broke their hurried fun
as they came singing brown with rain and peat
must whirl and babble eagerly to meet
where that last lake glows in the hill poised sun.

And where those slacks spread shadow on the stubble
surely the soil is somehow sacred yet:
the autumn moon lifts up its orange bubble
where that old farmer, resting from his trouble,
has left a grief the trees do not forget.

—

Now Bonkaw Sept 33

Early Morning in November

I stood and gazed. The hills were hid in mist,
Save where a narrow avenue of wind
Had tunneled thro' and left a core of green,
Two fields, a tree clump, and a glittering cottage . . .
Back'd by the sky's half circle of lightblue.
And as I stood and strove to make a phrase
That would embrace the magic of the thing . . .
The reminence of wonder, the delight,
The inescapable sense of time at work
Shaping an instant of significance —
A poet's birth, a saint's revelation,
Or an old man who had loved the grass and sky
And known the shall and attitudes of trees,
And now grown drowsy sees for the last time
The blue and green that now visit his endeavor
And will lay round his everlasting sleep . . .

2015.

#9

2015.
25

Chimney

Against the sky a stiff incredible chimney
Crane's sooty neck thro' a ^{bare} green clump of trees
Like a primæval monster rearing head
To find fit marsh to swallow in and sleep . . .
Then to the right a row of dirty walls,
A trampled phoenix' nest for the strange creature
That has destroyed the greenness of an acre
With slag and mud . . .

Yet imminent in the air
Earth's triumph, winds' low bayle, that recall
To frightened mind the ultimate victory
When bricks are mossy stone, walls priz'd apart
By thrusting nettles, and the chimney down,
A burrowed mound for rabbits. Earth again
Green from the hill marches to the shipless sea,
And sky unvested by anything save cloud . . .

24th.

New Art. Concrete. Steel-tube. Steel.

O Babylon Babylon down in the dust.

A dynasty perishes, mountain crags reel;
the flint stuck flash; taut bowstring, spinning wheel
to a sick child crying for a sodden crust.

Sky topt. Sea plumb'd. Andes mood back.

Concrete. New Art. Radio.

A firm road curves where stumbled rutted track;
tractor hives slumbering snow:
street soaps play'd in Boston leard in bones.

O small man in high pulpit .. Pope on throne,

O Priest on tower top Babylon's in the dust..

The holy of holies a dozen loads of stone,
and that sick child cries for a sodden crust

24th.

Leicester Nov. '33

21st
X

24th.

27

So from defeat I learn
the stress and strain of bone,
the twigs that smoke or burn,
the stone remaining stone
no matter what way thrown.

I shall go forth from hence
aware of entity,
and life's imminence
and tumult, I shall be
at once both rock and tree.

✓
22 Poems 336 lines to here.

2nd.

Alone and lonely on the peaks of thought
friendless I cling the wind's roar in my ears,
while the bright lark by nature and untaught,
rested in ledge, glows singing thro' the spheres.

Yet in th' infrequent fluttering intervals
between heel-pint and grit-grasping fingers,
dizzy and sick above the mortared walls
I catch a song till it on safe ledge dingers

—

There was a woman once who came
into my night with torch afame
and in the glow I knew awhile
both rugged mire and dusty mire,
and foams sufficient day to ride
trave songs agenst surrounding night;
but further in the wrdning waste
my weakness falter'd of her taste . . .
and now I wander lone and blind
with dead songs ringing in my mind

—

After a score is made
after I am alone . . .
chastened but unafraid,
and somewhat wiser grown . . .

When next adventure comes
I'll follow the wild call
if not with flags and drums
at decent interval . . .

God knows but at the end
I shall have grown so wise
that when loud trumpets roar
the crumbling crags and skies

I shall sit lonely still
debating where to go
No sea be lost in hill
and Zalms creek under snow.

I tried him, found him worthless dross . . .
I weighed her, found her broken clay . . .
and tho' I knew Christ's tilted cross
makes every day a judgment day
I cannot find it in my heart
to leave these people as I stand . . .
deep in the thicket serpents start,
and Christ's side drips new minted blood .

14th

High on the wind-combed hill up down
in misty hollow neath bare trees

I felt great tides of wonder drown
the frail craft of my vain unease . . .

Yet in the rice and full of waves
I gained a richer quietness,
gulf that rest soul man losing saves,
and find a spear thrust kind carcass

14/15
33

Is there no woman beautiful and wise
To love and save her soul in saving mine ?
Are there no eyes will laugh to meet my eyes,
and find me ready like old famous wine ?

Is then the thing that I was born to say
to lie unended in my frosty heart . . .
for want of comfort of a sunny day
that wakes the cold and bids dry fibres start ?

14th

Already Christmas buries near . . .
say gala windows, lights and toys . . .
and under stars cloud-swept and clear
^{ways} Loarce with declaim with raucous noise . . .

But in the least no Christmas yet;
no shepherds of the desolate mire
in breathless eagerness forget . . .
No threat to flakes of sleet and wind . . .

For ne no child is born bring
new joy to stars. No magic ride
tis with a long ^{days} journeying
To bear me to my monarch's side.

16.1K
35

[38/32]

Sonnet.

I ask no meaning of the flying leaf,
nor query hills to find if they supply
a bland solution to the troubled sky
when autumn loads the sullen winds with grief :
nor where tides thunder on white crested reef
do I require a fervent heresy
to prove me safe, God kind, tho' bare trees cry,
year after year, that Spring and life are brief .

It is enough to face the hail sharp wind,
and let Leels drain the virtue out of thy ;
sing tho' dark woods by rigg'd season thinn'd,
ad stop on hills to hear mile distant surf.
If death's the end then life has meant good measures,
if it be not, you're richer by wise pleasure .

[39'-40']

X

1615.

Born of a quiet student in his prime
and of a sensitive woman, growing wise
by traffic with a household's enterprise
yet in her growth defiant still of time;
I was not nurtured on the bread of rime
or cradled by the Muses' lullabies,
but used my hands, delighted in my eyes,
taught only truth was virtue fear a crime.

Now having in my parents equal share
~~with~~ something added, something taken away,
mine is the steady arrogance to dare
but not the old capacity to pray.
I have more wit, more craft in verse than they
but not the quiet joy of being fair.

—

I have a core of self that I must not betray
a central candle flame that if I put it out
will stink against the stars, and blur the moon's white way,
and set men coughing in a shivering spasm of doubt.

But if I keep it whole, tend wick, ward off moth's wing
it will be as a beacon in a lonely place
til frightened birds catch sight, gain least aghen being,
and make one hill til down a lone in homeless space.

✓

18

Young girl you put a spell
upon my heart and mind.
God grant it use me well
and joy in love be found
the after we lie down in hell
on beds of flane and bound.

✓

1815.
37

Before the sap in me be dry,
 before you wither to the bone,
 on mountain heather let us lie
 who will lie dead in clay alone . . .

And with the mountain wind as friend,
 with trees and grass word Godspeed,
 be thou, before spring humor end,
 quick clasping soil to my flying seed.

From men and Nature I have crammed my mind,
 have made my life - a rich anthology . . .
 of faces over cottage doors, and wind
 eager for spring, and spring, and beggar tree:
 and drifting hours on rivers: ropes and oars:
 ripe tales between puff-pipes: barge horse's stride:
 great breakers crying round rock-littered shores,
 - and wet paint shining on an old boat's side:
 sad verses made by poets who were wise
 in way of bird and blossom. Tags of song:
 great loves that were smiting to eyes:
 and witty books when winter nights were long:
 things said by tramps, by peasants, by a friend,
 by goddrunk men who hurried on their way:
 red apples at the narrow garden's end,
 a field of flax, and half a hill of hay .

1915

1915
41

If I should find the seed of death
lodged in a crevice of my heart
shall I with mad tormented breath
run wildly to the hills apart?

Or shall I brood and tend the plant,
watch its slow journey to the light
till, many leaved and suppliant
its minor beauty opens bright?

Then when the rivers of my blood
have watered root, and warm red soil
nurtured its written attitude
in contemplation bless my Toil?

On better bide intent upon
the traffic of the skies with me
till, startled, on uncertain dawn
I greet my lantern's leprosy?

To be complete within,
stand poised beneath wild stars
unmord the lone or thin
provoke compassionate wars . . .

Unmord the wrong prevail,
not angry at defeat
the chant of mourners fail
in the oblivious street.

For strength to match hot deed
rich nurture of the heart,
cold chastens. Tonight I need
hot will not break apart.

How shall I gain this end?
Know god for God and wait

til some wise gentle friend
lie down with me as mate . . .

and I get strength from her,
wisdom clean upon,
the mists of empire blur
the banners of the dawn.

1915 Poem
Sunday Referee 1934
Jan X

43
1915

O Who will share with me

the traffic of my heart?

The stripping of the tree:

the frost that splits apart:

the winds that craze the boughs:

the snow that breaks the branch.

There's no abiding house—dry seasons run on,
endures time's avalanche . . . night's sable avalanche.

Cold dawn, the sun at noon
by cloud unreckon'd blurd.
rain at the harvest moon,
and lilt of larks unheard.

Yet for the comfort here
shall sometimes fall adrest
the high stars of the air
upon the rain chill breast.

22nd

I had not thought to find my heart
move at th' approach of love again . . .
as across bugles stir and start
with yellow whimpers mid grey pain

I said when love before was done
"This is the end . No more for me
shall doldrums grasp the striving sun
and stars rush past ecstatically : . .

I know love now and know as well
the sober autumn of delight . . .
Let me stride on till miracle
or miracle crowds in the night .

There are so many things I learn :
and this was one , I therefore go

from the deep chasm where sunsets burn
up bleak lonely peaks of snow . "

But thought betrays me once again ,
the heart knew better , beat and cried ,
alert to ecstasy and pain
when you , reluctant , reach my side .

2715

2715-

There is much comfort in the kindly rain,
 clear healing in the fingers of the frost,
 while turf beneath your feet makes end of pain,
 and if you wait the wind brings back what's lost.

So take your grief to mountains, not to God.
 And if you suffer so and kneel in prayer
 by some ditch side, rain matted and untried,
 Bramble waits and spirits of the air.

The streams of glory shall descend on you,
 and springs of blessing gush from the ground,
 til earth's carousal with { they
 shall signify the lost has now been found

I walk with men and feel within me sing
 the cabalistic wonders I can do . . .
 of low alone I held the silkren string
 to lead them from the labyrinth to the light,
 and yet none spoke to me as if they knew
 I'd be their captain in the thunders fight.

But my small puny self was no wise hurt . . .
 Prides buckler turned the thoughtless darts aside .
 So to the cosmic bulletins alert -
 I strode back to the dark to plan my wars .
 But at sheets' end the foolish lampلاء died !
 I'm no Messiah when I gaze at stars -



27/5

A man may share, it seems, his board and bed
with any woman and in time will grow
affection lasting til one's safely dead,
a home made candle lit from Person's glow.

There may indeed be snoller partnership
of blood and bone, desire equate with Lust,
when body aginst body, lip to lip
achieve a unity transcending dust.

But the traffick of their bodies be
a thing conjunct, of common blood and bone . . .
Yet for them both thoughts' ultimate ecstasy
must lie unshared, the toucht by each alone

28/5

Forgive a Poet's Vanity,
O Lord, who fumbles Verses He
in foolish Moments deems will live
longer than Daffodil or Thorn,
who in Irish Slangas seeks to give
the Meaning of an April Morn.

For He is weak, has not the Skill
to span a Stream, or cleave a Hill,
Has not the Love to bore the Stars
and sum their Secret in a Graph . . .
Spare Moment to from Thy cosmic Wars;
Forgive him, Lord, but do not laugh.

29/5

There has been little frost this year.
No snow has flurried down the hills,
but the stars were large and clear
steel rods of rain have runned the hills . . .

I have gone out and seen the trees
take boding fingers at bleak skies
and stubborn grass in crevices
turn leaf's defeat to victory

29/5

For many days I have not seen the Lord
more magical as bright among the trees :
the scattered song of winter-fightend bird
breaks only rarely the mists' silences .

But I have seen a small star tumble down,
touched surely by the passage of his wings . . .
and the landscape lie, cold, baffled, brown,
I catch the green damp smell of growing things .



Dominion X

29/5

A season yet I shall send out my armies,
subdue a dozen countries of the mind,
lay tribute on the stars - and bid them speed
bright billion for the coffers of my heart:
put fear to flight and set up boundary posts,
start commerce with earth's ends and trade my wares
for spoil of Asia, bales of fantasy,
and cargoes of rare spices from the moon,
make treaties with wise princes, and wage war
on trampling creatures that would spoil the orchards.

Then hold awhile to a precarious peace,
drain fens, drain barns, and pave wide roads across
the central provinces of my wide domain;
pull slums down, crazy heritage of falters,
and set an equal law from sea to sea.

But after that a slow withdrawing in,

53

first
a concentration on my early estates,
a bribing of uncertain aliens,
a disregard action against ~~messy~~ ^{mutineers} troops,
then long retreat from frontiers early won,
and slow surrender at my city gates.

Pray Heaven I fall before the walls go down,
and have no need to barter crown and sword
for sleepy exile in a foreign place,
by stranger hearts, at mock attack & defense
on chessboard, going over old campaigns
til hearers yawn and elbow me to bed.



Poems in January

1933.



1st Jan

57

Composed "The Quarry",
Cavehill
during a walk alone.

Now God is in the rock and horn,
but if I seek him here he flies,
and is perpetually reborn
in skylarks' song and rabbits' eyes.

But these are shy at my approach,
climb out of sight, in burrows hide.
The only god that I can touch
is Christ whom I have crucified.

915

Now numbering my years - a score and five
I late have made - a time with circumstance,
accept the fact that I was born alive,
and feet that walk, with care may learn to dance.

Take what the tides may crash upon my shore,
enjoy the threat that sweetens dangerous breath;
but still my heart lacks courage to ignore
the blow and murderous ignorance of death.

11th Jan.⁵⁹

I who have heard the thrushes sing
in early frost when yellow dawn
drifts honey on the sugar'd lawn
shall never do so gay a thing.

I who have seen, 'gent' tilled skies,
a gull, where branches creak and tore,
hoise level in the tempest's core,
shall never be so calm and wise.

I who have watcht a brown rook fall
sheer from a hill, and beat a cliff
shall never make my hieroglyph
more shining or more lyrical.

11/15

11th-12th

61

She looks on me with interest
but never quite with love.

I gaze upon each maddening breast-
and scarce have strength enough
to wrinkle back the platitude,
avert my lustful stare.

Pine needles in a starry wood
have bedded girls as fair.

—

(1-33)

To Demos

I have betrayed you. I have sunk to fight,
thought only of my belly's warm and girth,
I who was marked a rebel from my birth,
Leard Connolly at a corner one dark night,
and knew from childhood those who bore the light-
the Troubled seasons of the spirits' dearth:
and have, in vision, seen the friendly earth
spread grain and vine and orchard free and bright.

I cannot ask forgiveness for my wrong.
You, many headed, have no voice to speak:
already now the skylarks' hurried song
falls on my ears with impact growing weak
and if I wish to daybreak to remain
significant I must go back again.

→

I walkt a long half mile to see the moon
hang lantern - lovely in a naked tree
for I am free

To follow the wind's flots, the season's tune
with caught but shadow keeping company.

But when I came and saw what I desired
my heart grew heavy thinking of what's lost.
This night of frost

I must to back, with mind and body tired
to sit at earth, companioned by a ghost.

I gaz'd on old Carnmoney in the light
a white frost kindled moon spilt lavishly . . .
knowing full well I'ell come another night,
say, fifty years from now, when there will be
another fellow standing here alone,
sad with the memory of his father's sire
who lies beneath the weather blotted stone,
yet once crackt nuts beside All Hallows' fire

Elegy
on Passing the Late Residence of
Francis Joseph Bigger.

You, Francis Joseph Bigger, in my youth
stood out as one that loved this country well.
You hoarded up the little shreds of sooth
of those who, battle eager, always fell.

I can remember moving here and there
about the dream-tacket rooms of your old house,
stopping a moment to return the stare
of some green-coated volunteer
who sagged with pity from his tarnished frame;
or pushing back with nervous fingers
the curtain from young Emmet's clay cold mask:
the odor of slain blood forever lingers
crying to deaf ears unaccomplish'd task:
or fucking book up rich with magic name
of some old fool; stained with rebel tear

whereat good smile, and growing garrulous
repeat the tale, deliberate the year
when Hope, monro, or Henry Joy
first had horizon comes bevery boy
who strides these hills or bears an old tune play'd
by ballad singer cunning in his trade,
or old wise woman heavy with the lore
of faery horn and danesfort crumbling spell

and I remember too, low at the door
with lifted hand you stood to cry farewell,
with roughly bearing of a Gaelic chief
and gesture of the ancient Celtic fashion.

Your sill is drieded with the withered leaf,
and strangers pass your windows with no thought
for that old anger and that naked passion ..

I yet may live to see the fight refought,
to see the Saxon driven to the tide,

and these long hills, by blood so often brought
bear crop and fruitage for a people's pride.

So, Francis Joseph Bigger, rest you ken :
your memory shall not die out from men ;
but while I live I shall recall that day,
the winds of forty winters roar and roar,
when you stood haughty in the Keltic way
with lifted hand at your mean castle's door.

—

Where men build houses someone starts a shop.

There have been those who fled the cities' roar
and built a shanty on the mountain top,
or pitch'd a shed along a rocky shore,
but someone always came and built a shop.

To live upon the soil, grow root and crop,
and eat your growing, free from sticky fences . . .
walk thro the grass, pick apples where they drop,
dig whiles, and weed, or mend a stretch o' fence,
but someone always comes and builds a shop . . .

Christ, on the mountain, raised his hand, cried "Stop !"
Here shall ye abide while I go up to pray."
They woke to hear the horses slip-a-clap
as legions came, torch arrogant array . . .
Ken someone came and built his little shop.

Now having come to wisdom in my thought-
 I find the price of freedom loneliness . . .
 know that alone long battles may be fought-
 yet where's the help if wounded in the press ?

So 'tis I have stood against the sky
 and known Hostlers rush eagerly to bless
 yet who can share the shining grace if I
 stand coldly free in craggy loneliness ?

I want a woman who will know
 the shy things by the hedge's side,
 nor think me hesitant and slow
 if I should wait for love's full tide,

who will remember in the rain
 a verse that summons back the spring . . .
 for that the living's constant pain
 in life here is the magic thing .

[2-33]

Sonnet.

On Municipal Election Results.

What is the use? The people turn aside . . .

forget the spirits' hurt, the body's pain . . .

The dark days standing in the blown grey rain,
forget the politician, how he lied . . .

forget the crushed lives of the lads that died

To bring imagined golden days again
and at the banner's beckoning remain
obedient to an incredible empire's pride . . .

What is the use? Why show the magic thing?
Here's what won't give them comfort, freedom, joy;

yet with loud drums and frenzied flags they sing
in ragged rabble, shivering man and boy,
to celebrate the old fantastic story
of hungry workless people voting tory.

17/15

18/15 71

While I in comfort sit this night
by fire and books to rive and write

down dismal streets of dirty snow
unbought the painted ladies go :

in grimy pubs with foggy panes
old men spin out their ravaged brains :

and in a little attic bleak
a sick lad sleeps with coughing weak :

in lonely cell a communist
bangs on the wall with frenzied fist . . .

and at a corner people sing
a tawdry song of Zion's king,

but in the little alleys dim
the children have forgotten him . . .

If he were here I do not know
to which of them he first would go .

One thing I know : This snowy night-
he would not sit at home and write .

What use to go to Plato ? Greece is dead —
or read the more books of that emperor,
for all the golden things he thought and said ?
Or the wise limping slave for all his lore ?
Even dear Francis crying to the birds,
or lying down in flames with that bright where,
can wake us wonder with his stirring words :

These days they never dreamt of . Time breaks up
The gristy fabric of the universe
whirls into stars beneath the microscope .
^{sheds}
Before dead gods drowses stupid worshippers .
The sheets are crammed with shouting hungry men .
The corn is ripe . There are no harvesters
One man makes fire and fire ; one conquers pain .

Where shall I base my feet ? what attitude
shall hold me laughing calm and spirited,

75
18¹⁵.

The shattered planets chill the thinning blood,
and on a field of street the day breaks red?
The wine is sour. The fire dies out in smoke.
Love slumbers only in a varred bed,
our humor bubbles in a dirty joke.

—

a black and slabby tree
Teaches humility.

I went on bended knee
beneath its frosty whi

from
But at the brown brook's lip
once more won fellowship

✓

2320

Then to my left a little wood
cried, wind tormented, til day's flame
display'd their naked attitude
and they grew silent in their shame.

So like to these as bows a pen
having endured my fallen leaf,
I must not use, by day, with pen,
the lyric eloquence of ^{grief} death—

77
2320

I know a quarry skylarks throng
to make the day a dazzling song,
Lie in a ring of little hills
reacht only by a muted lane
where may has still small daffodils
and pools a fortnight after rain.

There autumn of the year comes slow
and March less drifts of grapefruit snow.
The seasons hurry thro' the land,
are gone, ere we are right aware.
When old, with leisure at command
I'll go and better with them there.

Star Reader.

232d

Last night before the frost { there
 rain fell
 a scattered shower upon the road .
 At touch of stangled faery's spell
 ten thousand points of silver glowed .

I may not all Gods' splendor guess,
 I cannot share his cosmic wars,
 But I can tell His Happiness
 when He astrides singing thro' the stars .

I am compelled by trick of mind
 to speak to lonely walking men
 when baffled by a roaring wind
 I lean on gates for breath again .

If they be old or peasant bred,
 civil they speak, or stop awhile :
 their wise words singing in my head
 have shortened many a rocky mile .

But be they city bred & young
 with ignorance they make reply ,
 mumble as fish a borrowed tongue ,
 unlearned in trade of tree or sky .

29th.

I have lain sulky in my bed,
 struck by the season's wayward mood
 entrained engines thro' my head
 pounding, hot signals flushing blood.

So surely when I rise again
 encrust, once more my traffi slant-
 with bales of wisdom bought from pain
 safe in the sidings of my heart

The Young Men.

Our thought has gained precision - can
 stab the heart it seeks to wound
 Set of a fabled famous man,
 cock-a-doodle on his favorite ground -

til tho the structure of campaign
 be armature of rigid steel
 the star cold signals of the train
 ignore no turning trolley wheel.

But there is somehow gone ashay
 for all our files and indexes
 the eager turn, the gay child's way,
 the ~~singing~~ ^{singing} joy of nimbleness.

31st Jan.

83

I walk with love in fancy still
where lords & ladies deck the hedge,
and wind ^{comes} (stamped) moorlands spill
thin gold across the cliff's sharp edge

But soon or late a wandering bird
crying across a shadowy glen
brings grief (and grief) for evermore
and I am left alone again

25

Poems in February

[2nd.]

How do I know the Spring will come this year?
Because it has not failed me since the first
green fancy burst
in startled leaf, a sticky pioneer?

Nay but how do I know if it will come
this year again? Snow has been known in March.
Why should my larch
obey forever the monotonous drum?

Already somehow I give us as cool
lyric mood, when every leaf was bright
with song's delight
and even shone brighter for the early frost.

This year when every little bough is gay
caught in the full tide of the season's flood
no eager bud
shall try my wit against an April day:

and passing me men running to the trade
 will nod and point and plan the destined course,
 the lugging horse,
 swing axe, tense chain, the clearing in the glade.

But tho' Spring miss me with her 'custom'd joy,
 and never Autumn rest my weary heart -
 someone apart
 with foded page will gladden girl or boy,

shew shrived leaf knist by a careful hand
 to mark loved verses in anthology . . .
 Then there will be
 a momentary spring across the land.

✓

Sonnet. 3-33

4th

I must go out to meet the spring this year
 for wintershrieveld I have sat at home:
 and tho' when in the topful coals I peer
 strayed caravans of fantascie have come,
 yet they have been but shadowy array,
 Love flickered in a momentary breath,
 nor grappled with strong words in worded way
 and cast them down in a hasty sculptured death.

The gain my spirit battles for with time
 is not in quivering shadows in the dark
 but massive bodies bastions with nine
 as in the minds white sunshine tall and stark.

Such shapes compounded of the loss of sense
 must gainst time's tumult ^{be} of my heart's defence.

515.

I lost the vision, went in blackest night;
 saw space fantasmic total and absurd,
 life timed flicker of a guttering light,
 and knowledge only as an empty word.

So with cold heart and death-tormented thought
 I went at midnight down a lonely lane,
 knowing full well the fight must be re-fought
 to give me solace from dark logic's pain.

My fortune lies in that these struggles rope
 somewhere beyond me in the crowded air,
 That all my quarrels be upon the page
 and never skip the shelf to climb the stair.

515.

Two things broke Wordsworth. One of them was love.
 The other revolution. Either way,
 if I were put this instant to the proof,
 leave me as bleak and scarcely quite so broad.

What hope then? Is there any? Who can tell?
 One thing is sure. It were a kind defeat
 to save one little Lynn daffodil
 when the great cannon rumble down the street.

Sonnet 4 In Certain Mentors of Youth

Dark men who warr'd agenst my innocent youth,
 cold ignorant hearts that strove to crush my heart,
 to set sharp limits to the widening truth
 and school me in a browbeat stammering part,
 I have outstay'd you, stand today secure,
 my years a score and five, my arts alert,
 my blade well burnish'd and my aim grown sure,
 despite the years I grovel'd in your dirt.

To now the I am clear of your deceit,
 and well might vaunt my happy liberty,
 I shall not rest til trumpets of retreat
 blow your black legions to the welting sea,
 and every schoolboy shouting in the street
 from your stark treason is forever free.

Sonnet 5. Islands

Does every man love islands in his heart,
 dream islands in the rocky screaming train?
 tho' counter bound walk quietly apart
 in fancy round rock ragged shores? To rain,
 when gold lamp flowers in puddles down the streets,
 does every grocer or his schoolmaster
 see lighthouse blink bland eye at fog's defeat,
 or passing ship make silence lonelier?

There is an island, not mere schoolboy's tale,
 with kindly folk who know the sky and sea,
 where ledges tilled east with timeloy's ale
 break out each year in Hawthorn revelry:
 and with that memory shining in my mind
 I can endure lightsoal & flapping blind.

2101

After a Death.

I am disheart by our mortality
 for I have looked upon a deadman's face,
 and seen the firsht mouth a wax grey lie
 that once was move ^{to} eloquence and grace.

So every leaf that bargains with the spring
 already withers crisp in my despair
 for not a song but speaks a dusty wing
 and sunset is far more than I can bear.

Hear from a casement half way down the cliff
 a waterfall with curtain lace of moss
 broke white agenst the wind. Sand martens flew
 under the grassy eaves as darting swifts
 about a barn untailed of men . . .
 and yet that curtain seemd to hint of life,
 of house proud care that dwelt within the hill . . .

Perhaps a looknose dwarf has sturdy wife
 too busy far to stand and gaze across,
 and my ent in her kitchen business . . .
 Volances smoke has may be girded for roast.

22nd

Melaphysical Concert .

Today there came the first snow of the year
 I had forgotten almost how the trees
 pull on white shifts and leave black shoulders bare
 like sky and newly christened regresses . . .

For all my thought comes as sight opposite . . .
 white horses playing to a summer shore
 race winter round the courses of ^{my} art,
 and day break is the closing of a door .

Snow brings age not sleigh bells in the moon
 nor all that tinsel refine and bore:
 nor cotton wool delight of carol tune
 sung wisely by sweet boys outside the door .

But rather it brings heel marks in the hall
 as I ran in to have my hands awake
 strange arcs of white set down transitional
 from semicircle to a single flake .

22nd.

22nd.

97

I left the craft untaught for many days,
 thought poems - scarcely poems, ragged lines
 warped by the echo of remembered phrase
 and half-conforming to long known designs . . .

I said: My wits' grown stale. Take holiday.
 Rejoice in eyes and hands, in lips and ears.
 Fret not, dull brain. Dream drowsy heart go play.
 Verse dwindles after five and twenty years.

But in the process of this arise delight
 of sense in things external - suddenly
 snow lynes - laden gathered in the night
 and budgeons on my winter-withered tree.

already catkin blossoms take the wind
 shake meagre fringes in the snowhill air . . .
 and sally rods, by rains of autumn turned,
 put on shy green where rustling cubs were bare.

The brook that jogg'd beside the muddy lane
 with baffled murmur, sings a merry song
 and hearty choristers fulfil the strain
 by thrushes hinted at the winter long.

Sonnet : 6

Dream, heart, awhile. Tomorrow
There'll be no time to rest.

Put on a splendid sorrow
With sable-nodding crest.

Tomorrow, heart, will waken
With trumpets in the street,
And till the coin is taken,
Or muffled in defeat.

You shall not ease from labor,
In barricade on stone
With skull-faced want as neighbor,
Or falling back, alone.

No gilded sonnet stiff with similes
That have farct out a thousand loves before,
Nor any purple panoply of love
From trellised bowers or passion-shadowed seas,
For I who know the dreary craft of these,
And, when a boy, laid by a colored store,
Find love no altar whereon to pour
The distillation of stale vintages.

So when I say I love you it is you
The grey eyed, pout-lip'd woman of delight,
Not Helen, Cleopatra, Dandie who
Saw one brief instant in dead poets' sight,
For we have wisdom others never knew,
And stand undaunted by the brooding night.

The snow began before the daylight died
steadily drifting from the outer east,
til every lampost showed a crusted side,
and gardens spread white covers for gay feast.

The gather in the little slums were white,
and day blackt windows bore a fleecy square.
So when night came it scarcely was the night
with shining earth in moonwashed dripping air.

The fancy held me, shaping quiet song
of earth transfigured, paradisal slow,
for over all the city's dirt and wrong
came general redemption of the snow.

Sonnet: 7.

Is it not strange that you and I should meet
whose ways a little time ran each by each
the passing not the courtesy of speech
did we encounter in a quiet street?
For while a decade spun beneath my feet
you were beyond my bound and mind's baffled reach,
clear out of knowledge, leaving no last breach
to add one blast to fanfare of retreat.

Now suddenly we drift together, strange,
beholded somewhat by the misty years:
yet having each caught wisdom from the star,
a flickering light out of a starry range
the kindled in seasons' hemispheres.—
Who knows but we may make life lovelier?

27th.

Sonnet : 8.

I loved a girl with neither wit nor looks,
another too, who later proved a fool:
a third beguiled me by thin talk of books
^{dreaded} but feared the day break fierce and beautiful.

I said then: from my dull experience
a woman's virtues compact in a store.
I'll hoard and tend my shining innocence
till turned to ashes it shall vex no more.

But you came unaccoutable and rare,
with wisdom in your mouth and in your eyes,
and earth shone blithely in a brighter air
for spring, long quenched, promised gay replies.

So if you go from me or do not go
I have been happy knowing what I know.

28th.

103

I have read Byron at an open window,
fronting the sunset over Antrim hills,
and lifted eyes from verse to see white gulls
sweet sudden stanzas to the flag staff 107.
And I have leaned across the golden water
the startled cry of a man i-war
call up Childe Harold dead for liberty
and leave me naked coward with a book
^{marking} watching the acrobats' proddy of flight.

I loved you for the wisdom in your eyes;
no schoolgirl flutter of the leaded lids,
but such a sage as sees without surprise
time drift the palms and fret the pyramids.

Grey quiet eyes that ~~not~~ were to laugh;
soft panting lips that smile at vanity —
O Heart's Desire, be this your epitaph:
A poet once scald Heaven, Touching me.

I askt what wis-dom lay within your heart,
and what twelve foreign seasons might have taught,
for I guest eager after that lost part,
the gap that Eden makes in my lense thought.

Then quietly you answerd: "I shall grow
old, I am sure: I shall grow old and die —
If this seems little I would have you know
I came by this stale logic bitterly."

O Heart, this is not true, else we who write
imperishable lyrics with our blood
were greater fools than those who seek delight
in following a beaten ball thro mud.

For I have spayed my life that time in vain
may beat upon the bastions of Truth;
that tho' the body's beauty break in pieces,
in having love we have eternal youth.

Even for me the death of Christ is spring,
and birds are tokens of mortality.
for sorrow comes upon the swallow's wing,
Adonis givers on the cherry tree . . .

I have no heart to joy in frost's defeat.
before the up-surge of unsheathed grass,
for the laburnum dry gold on the street,
the chimney pots and gables too will pass



When urgent life has scroll'd his hearse demands
and pocketed with snark, unwilling fee
must you sit down to warm your broken hands
at chilling ash of old philosophy ?

Are there no trees to fell, whose bony boughs
are not as dry with wit of sun and storm,
that bent and dragged & strew within the house
will in due season smolder and keep warm ?

Poems in March

105.

I, when at least my fiftieth year has come,
Shall so have schooled my thought that I shall find
The word occasion serves for, as a thumb
moves over the cardindex of my mind.

Now I must sort and stack experience,
Take only what I need from touch and sight.
Lay down deep cellars for my wits' defense,
And sleep in snatches by a lamp at night.

In midnight Helyon at the Marah pool
I have drunken bitter waters of desire,
While pale things venomous and beautiful
Weave thro' the star points with green slimes of fire.

I have sat down as west beneath the trees,
Ring'd by white skulls and small birds' flinty bones,
That pecking ripe bright berries of disease
Have fallen or been broken against these stones.

For here each growing thing is scummed & foul,
The earth is salt, a reeking glow the sky;
And in the moon's green leprosy an owl
Scratches its dread and lets the sick rat die.

The midnight's peak is fast... and with the morn
The wakes the goatherds on Tibetan brink

I'll rear the drum-bores of the unicorn
 who'll set the world astir that I may drink
 of clean and silken water, see the trees
 stiffen green eager leaves, and all the glade
 break in a riot of gay primroses,
 and birds sing, berries crammed and unafraid.

Islands.

My hearts in islands, cliffs against the sea,
 salt grass on fields, ^{one bent} bent hedges, leaning tree,
 daybreak on low white banks of mist, and on
 smooth water, black'd with rails, the flaming sun.

I find my mind at ease in quiet speech
 with men at gates, or carts, or down the beach
 teasing dark nets out with brown nimble hands,
 or women over cottage doors, or bands
 of barefoot-flax-hair children, playing Looee
 with chalk and stones, who gaze with puzzled brows,
 half-laughing at the strange trooped city folk
 who toss them pennies, pat their heads and joke.

Time seems to move with slower tread and bring
 a cargo well worth waiting for. The spring
 on islands is far gayer. Autumn comes
 with riper wisdom into island homes,

Ran into streets where never plant is grown
Save sickly in the window may be one.

So when intimidated by cold stars
and vast galactic accidents, or wars
who half a million now burn fifty towns,
built by the insolence of clowns
in high debate, or doddering and grey,
who plot and dribble half a race away,
I turn to islands, islands I have known
with quiet people who for me are grown
wise with repeated seasons, innocent
of buckster jargon from stark tenement.

Our worst defeat for half a century
was when men left St. Hilda to the sea,
The seas roar, and the gannets cry,
The smokeless desolation of the sky.

For islands are a balance 'twixt the bare

uninhabitable places, and foul air
in fetid slums, and if we will survive
with rudder being, some of us must live
unrested by tumult, and unbaffled in
the crashing engine's roar, the looter's den.

We who would save the song, the dance, the story,
the patterned canvas, and old verses' glory,
must seek a haven, dedicate and free,
in some small island guarded by the sea.

8th.

We had together wet deserted streets
 at midnight in the springtime of the year,
 when March with eager trumpet daffodil
 play'd fanfare for the victory of the joy.

But in the city nothing buyers knew,
 save draughty lanterns in a long festoon
 where men had dug the road up and gone home:
 and at a corner near a pile of stones
 a watchman's brazier flinging policeman's fists.

Death brooding on us from the tilted roofs
 and leering at us from the broken panes
 so warm against our spirits that we fled
 from sight of stony brick and narrow street
 to where beyond the town's end strong winds sang,
 sweet with the breath and innocence of grass
 of mountain heather, and wide acres spreading

between us and the clear Atlantic shore,
 and rich with the delight of budding trees,
 peatreek from dreaming cottages, and snow
 still laying a cartload on lonely hills.

There then we stood, our hearts swept clear of dread,
 and from the high stars here came singing down
 with meteor dust upon his shining hair,
 his plangent hair, and stood with comets' foam.

8 15

The galleries ran with gusty lamplight's gold...
 A clock struck midnight somewhere we came by.
 Round sudden corners whining winds were cold.
 Grey ragged clouds raced dark across the sky.

Key raspt in lock; door grunting open wide
 A fumbling finger struck the hall alight.
 There swept together by what chancey tide
 We made an island in surrounding night!

9 15

Already I am wiser loving you,
 and richer in delight of sight and touch.
 So though Summer bring me nothing new
 The wonder of this early Spring is such

That even the cornfields darkening in the wind
 of old familiar lanes whose every stone
 memory has no place in my mind

915.

Dreary autumn, when the dying year
 stabs feeble daggers thro' the dripping trees,
 will surely shed the cloke and reappear
 a singing queen in endless pageantrees.

And not a cottage but will seem a lone
 where we might hide in quiet by the fire
 when shorted grass, dulled wit, blarney come,
 and ecstasy knits fingers with desire.

always
 There must have been those whose leavy knowledge
 could never clog the urgent singing blood,
 who knew unpeopled space and dead blinds suns,
 and random comets crashing into life,
 and delicate designs beneath the lens
 of beautiful & venomous disease,
 who knew the idiot child, the mother broken
 with syphilitic travail year by year
 yet carried all their days the singing blood.
 and the red gutted with its reeking flame
 the tall tree's core and felled it in the swank,
 and white worms slimed the burned flesh of maidens,
 putting to flight green maggots in nearby stalks
 the rabbits lay with beating hearts laid bare
 the faceless men tride in Canadian forests.
 These in their wisdom never slit the vein,
 or pulled the nervous trigger in the mouth,
 or reeled in drunken mindlessness to bed,
 or sat in darkness brooding late o' Sod
 but let the glory of the singing blood
 swing rhythms from dark blyght, from worst to best.

Before you came I had not known
a woman could be wise and fair ...

I loved one for brown eyes alone,
another for her yellow hair.

But always with a little dread
my thought should waken up their love,
yet hoping that an empty head
might serve as steady foil thereto.

I make a pact with time, agreed
to offer half my life to men,
yet set some woman for my need
by shedding thought and wisdom.

But now I find since you have come
that pact is shattered ... I am free
tho' thought and beauty down home
to life's essential unity.

Life's wise tides must flood thro' a woman's veins
that only waken men's peace with sport and start,
for I have known thoughts rich rose-nurtured rains
when your heart madly beats agenst my heart.

And suddenly you have become a flame
that caps and wraps the tree round, turning it,
that once would creak sad boughs for bygled fame,
to golden torch across the infinite.

So I who was not humble in my thought,
who bragged my love and play'd the pedants part,
touch wisdom all undreamt by being caught
seve arms about you, heart agenst your heart.

You with the slender Greek immortal feet
move softly thro' the causeways of my mind,
like Helen in the shouting Trojan street.
Yet must the epic fail. I am not blind.

You are not Helen: and altho' your face
calls up Egyptian splendor and desire;
when nervous brows put on dynastic grace
it is not Asia sets my blood on fire . . .

You are a Celt, and Ireland is the heart
both gay and sad with sun and rain and night,
makes of your spirit a rare thing apart,
-a center of high sorrow and delight.

So when I love you I fago the lone
of arthodel and Memphis in the sun,
see you stand lovely by a rockgrey shore,
of Sannets cry, blown spray, and daybreak spun.

Prelude in a Minor Key.

The fanfare of the crocus came
into my heart with golden flame,
but shining spring, already there,
had come from out the snowy air,
had quivered down from cloud to cloud,
and made the grass the wallet on front
to be the first of living things,
bond servant of her wanderings.

So the hokey-cokey strains his throat
to put the solstices in one note,
and the the rains of April fill
the trumpet of one daffodil
The effort is superfluous.
Articulate alone thro' us,
who let the singing season's mood
make slangas of the leaping blood,
this spring shall live beyond time's stir,
prelude to summer lovelier . . .

since we, thro' baffled days worn wise,
know love that solves the troubled skies.

O Love the planetary dew
that makes earth ageless, ever new

There is no hope.

Spring's feeble drums
are quiet now.

No bumble comes
across the slope
from sky to sea,
from sea to sky.

The bleak hill's brow
with one bare tree
stands lonely, high,
cloud-neighbor, cold
and you and I
grow old, grow old.

271h

and golden churchbells rang and rang

When I went out to Ballyclare
a sabbath joy lay on the land . . .
lost sky carks fill the shining air,
and who was good on either land . . .

Before a farm where peace abode
were speckled fowls and daffodils . . .
and at a turning of the road
the sudden glory of the hills,

and lambs on nervous legs that shank,
black quiet cattle moving slow . . .
like drawings in a picture book
I used to copy long ago.

So when I came to Ballyclare
the heart within me danced & sang
for laughing children through the square

I was glad that I was born
kinsfolk of a place so fair . . .
A sogged driver squawked his horn
and petrol filled the Easter air . . .

271h-

No minor poet eager for the spring
has walked more gaily thro' this April lane . . .
where nestled in a fork the thrushes sing
and run, make patterns of the shining rain . . .

Then I who sted an hour by dreamer's cloke,
forgo the trumpet voice of prophecy
and leave the tumult of the hungry folk
for quiet joy beneath a budding tree . . .

27th

I have gone out to see again
 old quiet places loved so long
 where bright birds sing, unmet by men,
 the Jacob's Ladder of their song:

Tight roads that climb far out of sight,
 rough bridges rich with nettles tall,
 wh- golden for my own delight,
 and April sunshine over all.

29th

Mullaghduibh Revisited 1921-33

There at the corner where the smithy stood
 and quiet farmers led great horses in
 a fetrot hump as red as dragon's blood
 Brushed clever with one yellow as the whin.

10.45 at the bridge end where I used to run
 to meet my father coming from the train
 a lonely Cork climbed up into the sun
 and left a trail grey as bright as rain.

29/12

Twelve years ago : I was a boy at cricket
 Bowling for hours under a pitiless sun .
 You cover the wond flying bat away
 and hurry off to meet you at the station .

Now I'm your lover , and a crazy poet ,
 and you are wise with a new world's delight . . .

And he , the former lover , is a Empire builder
 under a pitiless sun in Nigeria .

31/12

How is it always ?
 whose thought outtops the peaks
 whose limit is the sky ,
 who speak when Heaven speaks ,
 can face no final bill
 without a change of gear
 but suddenly stand still .
 sound makes reverse a fear ?

31st

Why must I always fail the final gesture —
 why in the nineties snub me to the slips
 or left the centre to the corner flag
 that should have struck the riving.

Why must I

who know the wise fruition of the year,
 the apple ripe, the Ford bulged, & the tide
 caught the ragged edge of winter wrack,
 have not one instant of full ecstasy,
 such can the quiet declension of delight.

Is this my nature? O, that this must learn
 to set the limit lower, be content
 with some defence agenot light grey bound forward
 or end held up while someone else goes on
 to hit his hundred as full off the notch?

No. That's too much. I am not old enough
 to find such comfort in a villa garden.

have I not walked at sunset on the hills,
 and seen the firs against the stormy gold?

I will go on. There is, I postulate,
 the element of chance. A penalty,
 debt placit, may raise a roaring shower of caps.

Tear up the docket of Walson.

31st

What richness of my being comes from sex,
 and what from merely drawing earthly breath?
 Why why should these chartreadings so perplex
 the worried pilot in the roads of death?

Here surely will be time for tables truce,
 with certified array of colored squares.
 Just now the stars must yield a dusky use
 and quote me to calm waters and clear air.

4th

Poems in April

^{Squeal}
 Why then this hurry? ~~Flood~~ of cornered brakes.
 Accelerator shrieking. Knuckled wheel.
 I am no wiser than the day long lark,
 nor better judge of time than daffodil.

I have cut in between a tram and wall
 until the air's bright roaring cataract
 swept earth and stars in bubbles past my face,
 and for an instant I have pivoted
 creation on my shoulder like a bat.

And at a corner pulling out and round
 I have gone down in a golden welter of joy
 as headlights of a headlong pony gland,
 only to rise, denied majestic end,
 a gashing baboon leaning on the wheel.
 Henceforth leave speed to swallows.

I am fed

by no like spring, a second splitting blow...
 but soberly await the season's yield...
 And as for change of place: if I am here
 this is the focus of my universe.
 I'll be no nearer centre anywhere.



If I be not the risen Lord
 why are the skies an April blue?
 That cherry & bright youth record
 proclaims some resurrection true...

I naked, at this moment, stand,
 The swaddlings of my death laid by.
 The stone has crumbled to my hand.
 The trees rejoice. and shall not I?

For I have watcht my boyhood go
 with travail and slow agony.
 And now the second birth must flow
 from bone to rock from rock to tree.



Ballade on an Inauguration

A richness comes upon my days.
A quiet glory gilds my sky.
The day breaks in a golden blaze:
and suns sink eastward splendidly.

I walk enchanted thro' the town.
The dirty alleys glow sublime.
The nearest grocer wears a crown,
and busmen speak in measured rime.

For I have reacht the peak of love,
the lacking skill to tarry there.
Yet still the ecstasy thereof
makes magic of the earth and air.

Tonight the shivering Jew prays bitterly
to his Jehovah hidden in a cloud.
The nazi motors roar and rattle by:
his shop is looted by an angry crowd.
Hoarse Hitler, scowling puppet, thunder growls
screams late to cover up his dribbling fear.
In Rome where one as vain is just as fond
the Pope inauguates a Holy Year.

In Kenya dispossess'd the negroes cry
Cost life, lost faith in promise that was proud
To bear the stamp of Britain's empire,
for gold is in the little fields they plow.
In smouldering towns near China's Wall the cowed
and broken people watch gaunt famine near

The Pope inauguates a Holy Year.

Mahatma Gandhi sees the daylight die
 His barred window, lit with grace endowed
 and wisdom won of starry ecstasy
 he weaves the Black Machine's Land magic shroud.

And in Meenut the prisons now unbond
 face death and fever for a dream held dear
 nor will betray the shining truth they vowed —
 The Pope inaugurates a Holy Year.

L'Envoi.

Prince, Prince of Peace, O Christ in Heaven,
 who do not worship, bear no rod nor spear
 nor stand with them that clavos crucify . . .
 The Pope inaugirates a Holy Year.

O you who are shaper of a flame's delight —
 in being flame yet delicate and white,
 who burn agenst the stars, and are not quenched
 when lake and hill, in glimmering dawn, are drenched
 with flashed sunshine, how may I, who make
 my noisy ballads for the people's sake,
 grow subtle in my thought and tune my song
 to gentle beauty free from labored wrong
 to lonely wisdom moving quiet ways
 above the flags and tumult of my days?

Yet in your heart you must have understood
 the old drums throbbing thro the leaping blood :
 and the new wise beyond the scope of verse
 like flame you can be fassionate and fierce . . .
 And to the impact of that terrible fire
 I hold the blemish blade of my desire —
 Leave, leave a shining core, or consume me quite
 O you who are shaper of a flame's delight —

Sonnet 9.

There in the lonely quarry where at dawn
 Larks rise on jets of music out of sight
 we stood together in the warm spring night
 with eyes turned to the hills whence day withdrawn
 had made a fading promise of the light.

There was no sound. The eager Larks had gone.
 The dark earth lay content. Thin scattered white
 ragged banner of the clouds was blown
 across the moon.

Then suddenly we heard
 the wind from sunset hills begin to cry
 and weave in Lyric more than any bird
 has ever uttered: magic of the sky,
 the dreamy land by trusting spring unstirred,
 and our high lesson's sweet ecstasy

I who have lost the promise and Howlkin,
 the high lark singing up the golden slope,
 have but new pattern on my spirit's scope
 and find blithe humor in an engine's din:

rejoice in woven walls of whirling green,
 in kind hills taken with no change of gear,
 in gestured hand besigned or to steer,
 in streamline glory of a low machine.

But hills defeated, sudden corners baulk'd,
 roads-up-and-downed gently held at bay,
 long sunset lakes at crimson end of day
 look no whit better than as if I'd walkt.

S

Howth

20th

I watcht the wind make merry in the bracken,
 Hungry Larks mock the setting of the sun,
 and I thought of lonely Erie all forsaken
 her laughing lovers and her foets gone.

Sunset on Howth Head.

We stood at sunset on the Hill of Howth,
 and watcht day draw his ragged banners home
 over the flat Meath plain. The harbor lights
 playd golden snakes and ladders on the water,
 while out to sea there was naught visible;
 but swerving falling gull's cries broke the mist,
 and far above our heads a lonely lark —
 sang on, sercissus of his crystal tune,
 as over all the low tide on the shore
 Blund Learings edge with baffled mystery.

We stood awhile not speaking. There were no
 words possible butter that word not
 shatter th'ecstatic moment. Here we we
 the citizens of Erie yet to be,
 begatters of the future, hearts that wore
 flames' badge of bright hopes unattained as yet:
 and for an instant we were basd secure

157
25
145

with music in our ears, and at our feet
the darkening landscape of dream cursed Eire' -
fading from sight, and leaving only song,
Cork's lyric, wind's soft answer, murmured surf,
that turns to sweetness & to high delight
the bitterness and sorrow of the island.

The night came. So not speaking we turned back
down crumbling paths thru heather to the road.
The Cork sang on, and startled covers stood
like rabbits in the bracken. Overhead,
scarce visible, the taller clouds drove fast
- the dust of war cars hurrying to the battle
that lay before us ere we build our dream.

But for a moment we had been content,
had bathed in fountain of the living light,
and with clean minds, bright eyes, and singing hearts,
we faced the troubled city's night of fear.

B. Steiner Jan 1934

27th 15
147 55

The Touch of Things

I know the touch of things : the play of mind
upon the smooth or ragged surfaces,
have reached such ecstasy by merely thought
sent skating over glaciers of sense :
advice in a logical intellectual way
the pattern a tree makes leaning across a window.

But these remain outside me - light and shade
move over them, and change them, after thought
til I become a strange anthology
bound by no thread save of a nimble wit,
and find no fabric for my spirits' home.

If life is to mean full frost and riper thought
these things must turn to blood, to blood within me,
til each of eyes is April rain transmuted,
and low of voice known on Antrim cliffs.

The when I set a flock of dreams adrift

They will be pigeons wandering at will,
not paper boats blown among the reeds
or helterskelter down the shaded stream,
but here small eager beings of their own
to flane or circle wavy possible clouds,
and then with homesick heart come back to me.

27th
55
149

When I found love agen, I prophesied
that with a sober and a wise head,
with dignity that never sinks to pride,
I'd choose my niche among the famous dead.

But love came, wild tornado! I am blown
hurriedly thru the whirling dusty street,
Ris danger a th mort, take joy ney own,
as strike the stones to flame beneath my feet.

✓

The Flowering Bush.

The tuffic of years make men older
 and time touch their temples with grey . . .
 Yet I'st left with my head on your shoulder
 - and wake when the birds bring the day .

The' mas drums beat me down, and forsaken
 I live out my exile alone —
 The flags and the horns be taken
 Yet this shall be bone of my bone .

And the wind rise and grow colder
 and the sun be transmuted by cold —
 Yet I'st left for a night on your shoulder
 O how can I ever grow old ?

At noon along a country lane
 where chance had set my wandering feet
 I met a red-faced beggarman
 with dust upon his ragged coat

He stopt me in my hurried stride .
 I fumbled dead for scattered cash :
 but he, ^{inert} (grazing) back across the road,
 and pointed to a flowering bush .

Say master what's the name is this ?
 I never seen a finer flower
 but I who love the tilt of trees,
 the poplar's thrust, the beavy pear . . .

The apples dropping on the grass,
 the Hale Caburnum drifting gold,
 stood ~~speckless~~ saffy, ignorant across

Where hat mus sit up the field.

I did not know the gleaming flower,
I could not share it with this man...
and we who might have come so near
left lonely down the country lane.



Sonnet 10.

Here where the longships of the Vikings ran
with beaked prow and dragon 'broidered sail,
and from the hills was rallied every man
to greet their landing with sharp arrow'd rail -

Here where the gulls still cry the cry of dread,
Raving remembered how the Danes went down,
and muffled oars bore back the king by dead,
and left the victor dead with ^{hark} sword and crown,

my love and I stand quiet on the hill
knowing at last joy's pinnacle and crest
but yet when men have joy forgot the Dane
they will remember, such I vaunt my skill,
how we once sag'd across the flat meath plain
and watcht the old day ^{day} die into the West.



27th -

I never more need
walk bitterly apart
when thunder out of the sky
defeats the singing heart.

For if the song fall dumb
and night lay shadows round . . .
With steady tread I'll come
back to familiar ground.

For having stood so long
on lonely hills I know
the worth of naked song
when winds bring rain and snow.

And I have found at last
a haven from the storm
where till the tempests' past
I'll settle and keep warm

27th

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March dust and April showers,
then blackthorn out in May -
the primrose also ours
what rent is there to pay ?

Pay back a song, a joke,
a careful foot, and eyes
that when far peat fires smoke
are full of strange surprise . . .

For out of bitter and strong
must come the sweet and fair -
a star-rejoicing song
from the night desolate air -

27th

O surely there is quiet laughter in your eyes,
and delicate care of hidden magic in your mouth
as one who never native to these troubled skies
went singing singing thro' the orchards of the south.

Exile you are, and I am also stranger here,
Lonesome for my own place; it may be your place too,
~~in love for me,~~ and make this valley dear,
and plant a little garden where blossoms never grew

28th

I heard the year's first cornetade in a mist
when I walkt out with love among the hills . . .
incorrigible sentimental —
Dame the knell of spring's last daffodils.

O such the pity dogs my foolish mind
that loses joy thro' fantastic fears —
Who knows when next the cornetade I shall find
in cheerless hills, and thro' a mist of tears?

Carneweeney Hill.

The spirit led me up a sturdy hill,
and spread the country flat before my eyes,
from stemless rising rags to the clouds
to the long Anturum slope where solemnly
the madder pycons stride across the bogs
as the silver lough streaks grey & black with squalls.

But no voice spoke temptation : did we fling
myself a safe to time and Providence.

There were cards singing almost lost in blue
The quiet rain fell on the ring of stones
and I knew well the task I must perform

Bring joy and love into the barren streets,
as gay as larklift, imminent as rain,
the manhood is a windy mountain top
and nellow age the radial descent.

1 climbed Carneweeney in the April sun
having again the lust for lonely hills,
knowing the spring half spent before begun,
and loving roses less than daffodils.

I recked here to see the country spread
romantic map before me & wrote
the high adventures of the rebel dead,
the lilting ballads of the country folk.

my thoughts then on the past, and how time flies
I threaded thro' the little wood of pine
with heavy tread as tho' the weighty skies
had broke Orr's cinders overburdened mine.

But facing up a field cut down by drain
and planted yard by yard with tiny trees -
mere twigs that brought Hans Andersen open

and reacht no higher than my lifted knees,

my thought revolv'd : and for more beautiful
it seem'd that men shoud for the future life,
mend road, fence bog, and dry the maddy pool,
and make a forest of the mountain slope

	Poems	Lines
November.	22	336.
December.	24	309

[Total for Year 1932 : 287 Poems 4,120 Lines.]

1933.

January	22	266.
February	22	261.
March	21	305.
April.	20	310.

