

Collins'
Silver Series.

No. 2.

LYRICS.



Come closer, heart I love,
 knock them against my side.
 Our life is ^{room} scope enough:
 the world is cold a wide.

We have so many things
 to do before we die
 will earn us buffetings
 and shouts of Crucify,

that I go sore adread
 if we have life enough
 to brim the battered head
 and keep us rich in love

?

Let me go out some early morn in June
 when pale stars flicker in the leafy boughs
 and childfaced moon
 comes tiptoe to the house
 when dayglow dies
 behind the sharp black hills a soft winds rise
 with melancholy in their dewy cries

For having seen black winter driven in
 before the lifted lances of the spring
 a watcht with sharpend sight the land begin
 to greet with green
 the feathered din
 of newtund throat a newly stretched wing
 a knowing summer never can fulfil
 the promise of the bud, the sticky thrill
 of the unfolding leaf I'd go before
 the fallen leaf drifts lightly to my door

what's wit or beauty if the heart's unkind
 or comeliness of feature with a truant mind
 sweet thought can give delight a subtil grace
 to meagre limb, stiff gesture, unaccustomed face;
 and kindliness of gentle look or hand
 can speak what only birds a children understand.

So even if you were not in your right
 but wise a lovely here would make your body bright.

?

We are the galleys slaves of chance;
the dupes of hope, the fools of time.
There is no pattern in the dance,
no meaning in the random rime;
and tho' we move with power or grace,
we have no more significance
than clouds across the moon's white face.

1933.

?

Hawk at Nightfall

I watch'd the wind make merry in the tracken,
the gay larks mock the setting of the sun;
and I thought of lonely Eire' all forsaken,
her laughing lovers & her poets gone.

1933

Danaë

Already Hawthorn broods upon
what was a black & naked tree;
so once beneath the 'whelming swan
dark Leda struggled to be free.

Yet at the rape I shew no shame
raise protest none, denide nor scold,
for soon that other Grecian dame
Laburnum will be wooed in gold.

1932

Beech

The chestnut beckons wistful speech;
the fir recalls jew Heine's palm.
Altho its' spring, the copper beech
keeps alburnum in the epigram.

The fish flapped on my shoes
turned up a chilling eye
its back a silver bruise
mouth oozing bloodily

So while I cut more bait
and with my dripping rod
I mused on chance and fate
and somehow pitied God.

1932

Autumn takes earth again.
The day breaks late and cold.
My friends are older men
and, heart, you have grown old.

1932

✓
This much I wish to know
(Say, who has overheard)
if, when the quiet snow
by thrusting shoots is stirred,
there is a whisper low
or trial trill of bird

that bids old earth again
repeat the dreary jest,
wipe useless spring on men
from disillusion'd breast,
or does she smile and then
renew the game with jest?

1932

23
New Moon

I turned my penny in my pocket
when I saw the thin moon rise,
wrist me fireside hearth and comfort,
sunny mornings, starry skies,

stood with open mouth & pondered
til the moon was left behind,
for thought, cheating me, expended,
took in all of humankind.

1931

Practical Mysticism

Gaze at a fire til it grow cold and far;
look at the moon til she wush hot & near:
Then suddenly space widens, & you are
naked & lonely on a tumbling star,
your throat sore bruised by thin hands of fear.

look at a tree, climb each bent twig in thought,
dove molelike with the writhing of each root:
Then suddenly the earth & stars are caught
in a live mesh, & in one pattern wrought
til God & you are one with seed & fruit.

Then, having done these things, go back to men:
live quietly the jagend of your days:
speak not above a whisper, only then
Durgent folk who will not come agen
& need your love & hunger for your praise!

1931.

Men clamor at me "Why delay?
we want this vision state today."
But I'm too wise to offer them
a jerry built Jerusalem

1931

Providence

White roses quiver
overblown
at the touch of a little
wind unknown

Yet the small wind passes
and yonder stirs
the tall dark green
herpetal firs.

1931.

?

If you were God
which would you offer to a bright-eyed boy?
creation's lovely ecstasy
or the spent heart's joy?

1931

There is no wind to shake the trees,
yet leaves break off & tumble down,
& reach the earth by light degrees
& smolder there in darkening hour.

They curl & beat about my head,
& clutch at lower twigs & clasp;
then fall & hush beneath my tread
their green conspiracy of spring

1931.

The Gardener.

Life limited his scope to this small plot
this tiny triumph over weed and rock
wherein he planted thyme and bergamot
and those gay steeples of the hollyhock.

But now if God has planned hereafter well
and does things fairly for the newly dead
this old man tends great banks of aphodel
and amaranthine blossoms bed on bed.

1928

Carol for Any Christmas

Sugar windows
cotton wool
make the winter
beautiful -

but the sleet drencht
minstrelsy
have no tinsel
spangled tree.

1928

X Nettles of Offence

One had a fair body
and one a lovely face
and I love each because of this
because of their great grace

Each in her love for me
plucked nettles of offence
while one lies robb'd in flame one is
shod with impenitence.

1928

Timber

Whether sunshine snow or rain
Caesar now and Charlemain
sleep and will not wake again . . .

Sand piles high on Babylon
Thistles cover marathon
Sheba's dead, and Solomon

Winds jet thro the gnarled trees
creaking with ten centuries . . .

Trees are more than dynasties

1928

A knot of quarrelling yews
gesticulate all night
like Klansmen met for a lynching
when the moon gives no light .

Their talk is a treacherous murmur
that never becomes a cry
but up in the fir-top branches
you can hear their victim die

1928

If there's a God
as some folk say
I thank him for
a happy day

and pray that he
all men shall bless
with equal measure
happiness.

1928

Queens ✓

Isis is dead: her name is hid
in the white dust of centuries
as sand heaps on a pyramid
and chokes the well's bare ring of trees

Helen is dead and windy Troy's
but tumbled stone and tufted grass
where singing shrill brown Arab boys
trudging beside their donkeys pass

1928

Hawthorn .

Some call it hawthorn
some call it may
and it's very unlucky -
so they say

When a white flame burns
along the trees
I catch its perfumed
lethargies

Its scent makes me sad
when I should be gay
for it's very unlucky -
so they say

1927

We're just like the people
who meet in a train
together a little
then never again

Some doze the whole journey
and some read the while
and some watch the country
mile after mile

-and some are concerned with
the speed of the train
together a little
then never again .

1927

Peace Pact

You bring the Hawthorn & Laburnum back
and they bring you, for it was during May
my town surrendered to your gay attack,
and hung its towers with flags for holiday.

You were repulsed; another banner came
putting a deeper bondage on the place
But when the Hawthorn flaunts its white hot flame
that treaty's threatened by your mocking face

?

~~Why did ye die,
Macdonagh, Pearse
and Connolly,
whose name in verse
could make a heart
of stone to stir
and break apart
Tynes' sepulchre?~~

1929

Peace Pact

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and Connolly,
whose name in verse
could make a heart
of stone to stir
and break apart
time's sepulchre?

Young girls alone are lovely
thin ash trees in the wind
the grace of each young body
tilts spring across my mind

Their faces and white bodies
heal up the hurt of time
til old immortal ladies
walk forth again in rime

St. Stephen's Day

Saint Stephen's day. The sun was bright
It seems a prelude of the spring
The robins pecked at withered laws
and stiff necked swans were on the wing

The old men in their overcoats
came tottering along the roads
blinking sun blinded, peering round
like dull a spring awaked toads

And yet their voices chattered shrill
like noisy lads intent on play
for surely they saw winter gone
bawled once again of his tough prey

Opheia

In the fine rain small birds made merry din
when she turned down the lane towards the river
Then gusts of March blew down and in the thin
delicate sunlight set the rushes ashiver.

The sun grew strong, the rain wore off, and she,
bending above her rake began her labor.
Sleek crows beat fast, and somewhere in a tree
a hidden bird made melody her neighbor...

She did not come to help him with the cows
in the far meadow when her father shouted.
He only startled thrushes from the boughs
who fled like frightened sparrows kestrel routed.

In the cold dawn small birds made merry din
when tired men searched the willow-bordered river
And when the wind blew back the rushes thin
they found her drowned where ralley's creek a shiver.

NOTES