

THE HARP-WEAVER
AND
OTHER POEMS

BY
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THE HARP-WEAVER
AND OTHER POEMS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
RENASCENCE AND OTHER POEMS
A FEW FIGS FROM THISTLES
SECOND APRIL



THREE PLAYS
ARIA DA CAPO
TWO SLATTERNS AND A KING
THE LAMP AND THE BELL
THE KING'S HENCHMAN



TO
MY MOTHER

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PART ONE

MY HEART, BEING HUNGRY

MY HEART, being hungry, feeds on food

The fat of heart despise.

Beauty where beauty never stood,

And sweet where no sweet lies

I gather to my querulous need,

Having a growing heart to feed.

It may be, when my heart is dull,

Having attained its girth,

I shall not find so beautiful

The meagre shapes of earth,

Nor linger in the rain to mark

The smell of tansy through the dark.

AUTUMN CHANT

Now the autumn shudders
In the rose's root.
Far and wide the ladders
Lean among the fruit.

Now the autumn clambers
Up the trellised frame,
And the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.

Brighter than the blossom
On the rose's bough
Sits the wizened, orange,
Bitter berry now;

Beauty never slumbers;
All is in her name;
But the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.

NUIT BLANCHE

I AM a shepherd of those sheep
That climb a wall by night,
One after one, until I sleep,
Or the black pane goes white.
Because of which I cannot see
A flock upon a hill,
But doubts come tittering up to me
That should by day be still.
And childish griefs I have outgrown
Into my eyes are thrust,
Till my dull tears go dropping down
Like lead into the dust.

THREE SONGS FROM "THE LAMP AND THE BELL"

I

OH, LITTLE rose tree, bloom!
Summer is nearly over.
The dahlias bleed, and the phlox is seed.
Nothing's left of the clover.
And the path of the poppy no one knows.
I would blossom if I were a rose.

Summer, for all your guile,
Will brown in a week to Autumn,
And launched leaves throw a shadow below
Over the brook's clear bottom,—
And the chariest bud the year can boast
Be brought to bloom by the chastening frost.

II

Beat me a crown of bluer metal;
Fret it with stones of a foreign style:
The heart grows weary after a little
Of what it loved for a little while.

Weave me a robe of richer fibre;
Pattern its web with a rare device.

Give away to the child of a neighbor
This gold gown I was glad in twice.

But buy me a singer to sing one song—
Song about nothing—song about sheep—
Over and over, all day long;
Patch me again my thread-bare sleep.

III

Rain comes down
And hushes the town.
And where is the voice that I heard crying?

Snow settles
Over the nettles.
Where is the voice that I heard crying?

Sand at last
On the drifting mast.
And where is the voice that I heard crying?

Earth now
On the busy brow.
And where is the voice that I heard crying?

THE WOOD ROAD

IF I were to walk this way
Hand in hand with Grief,
I should mark that maple-spray
Coming into leaf.
I should note how the old burrs
Rot upon the ground.
Yes, though Grief should know me hers
While the world goes round,
It could not in truth be said
This was lost on me;
A rock-maple showing red,
Burrs beneath a tree.

FEAST

I DRANK at every vine.
The last was like the first.
I came upon no wine
So wonderful as thirst.

I gnawed at every root.
I ate of every plant.
I came upon no fruit
So wonderful as want.

Feed the grape and bean
To the vintner and monger;
I will lie down lean —
With my thirst and my hunger.