THE FUGITIVE

RABINDRANATH TAGORE
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BY

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

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TO

W. W. PEARSON
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vii
Darkly you sweep on, Eternal Fugitive, round whose bodiless rush stagnant space frets into eddying bubbles of light.

Is your heart lost to the Lover calling you across his immeasurable loneliness?

Is the aching urgency of your haste the sole reason why your tangled tresses break into stormy riot and pearls of fire roll along your path as from a broken necklace?

Your fleeting steps kiss the dust of this world into sweetness, sweeping aside all waste; the storm centred with
your dancing limbs shakes the sacred
shower of death over life and freshens
her growth.

Should you in sudden weariness stop
for a moment, the world would rumble
into a heap, an encumbrance, barring its
own progress, and even the least speck
of dust would pierce the sky throughout
its infinity with an unbearable pressure.

My thoughts are quickened by this
rhythm of unseen feet round which the
anklets of light are shaken.

They echo in the pulse of my heart,
and through my blood surges the psalm
of the ancient sea.

I hear the thundering flood tumbling
my life from world to world and form
to form, scattering my being in an end-
less spray of gifts, in sorrowings and
songs.

The tide runs high, the wind blows,
the boat dances like thine own desire, my heart!

Leave the hoard on the shore and sail over the unfathomed dark towards limitless light.

2

We came hither together, friend, and now at the cross-roads I stop to bid you farewell.

Your path is wide and straight before you, but my call comes up by ways from the unknown.

I shall follow wind and cloud; I shall follow the stars to where day breaks behind the hills; I shall follow lovers who, as they walk, twine their days into a wreath on a single thread of song, "I love."

3

It was growing dark when I asked her, "What strange land have I come to?"
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