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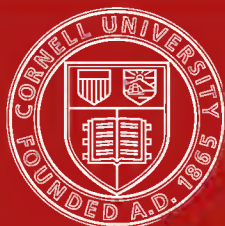
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FRUIT-GATHERING



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FRUIT-GATHERING

BY

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1918



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I

BID me and I shall gather my fruits
to bring them in full baskets into your
courtyard, though some are lost and
some not ripe.

For the season grows heavy with its
fulness, and there is a plaintive shep-
herd's pipe in the shade.

Bid me and I shall set sail on the
river.

The March wind is fretful, fretting
the languid waves into murmurs.

The garden has yielded its all, and
in the weary hour of evening the call
comes from your house on the shore in
the sunset.

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II

MY life when young was like a flower—a flower that loosens a petal or two from her abundance and never feels the loss when the spring breeze comes to beg at her door.

Now at the end of youth my life is like a fruit, having nothing to spare, and waiting to offer herself completely with her full burden of sweetness.

III

Is summer's festival only for fresh blossoms and not also for withered leaves and faded flowers ?

Is the song of the sea in tune only with the rising waves ?

Does it not also sing with the waves that fall ?

Jewels are woven into the carpet where stands my king, but there are patient clods waiting to be touched by his feet.

Few are the wise and the great who sit by my Master, but he has taken the foolish in his arms and made me his servant for ever.

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IV

I WOKE and found his letter with the morning.

I do not know what it says, for I cannot read.

I shall leave the wise man alone with his books, I shall not trouble him, for who knows if he can read what the letter says.

Let me hold it to my forehead and press it to my heart.

When the night grows still and stars come out one by one I will spread it on my lap and stay silent.

The rustling leaves will read it aloud to me, the rushing stream will chant it, and the seven wise stars will sing it to me from the sky.

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I cannot find what I seek, I cannot understand what I would learn ; but this unread letter has lightened my burdens and turned my thoughts into songs.

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