

IN THE MORNING.

BY
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DECEMBER 31.
IN MY ARM-CHAIR.

To my Mother.

AT CHRYSTEMESSE-TYDE.

*T*wo sorrie Thynges there be,—

Ay, three:

A Neste from which ye Fledglings have been taken,

A Lamb forsaken,

A Petal from ye Wilde Rose rudely shaken.

Of gladde Thynges there be more,—

Ay, four:

A Larke above ye olde Neste blithely singing,

A Wilde Rose clinging

In safety to ye Rock, a Shepherde bringing

A Lamb, found, in his arms,—and Chrystemesse

Bells a-ringing.

IN THE MORNING. VITA NUOVA.

IN MY ARM-CHAIR.

desert, treeless, boundless,
The low sun round and red,
Air stifling, moveless, soundless—
And I alone with my dead.
Her head lay on my shoulder,
The crimson light ebbed fast;
Her face grew paler, colder—
The face of my own dead Past.
Then darkness, black and frightful,
Dropped from the eastern sky,
With never a star, but a night-full
Of horrors creeping by.

I saw how fiercely glistened
Their mad eyes, two by two,—
They screamed, and as I listened
They laughed like a demon crew.
See how that huge hyena
Grows bolder than the rest—
Slinks—snarls—in the arena,
For the corpse upon my breast!

I laughed like the brutes around me,
I snarled on my stony bed,
I severed the ties that bound me
And gnashed upon the dead.
The tawny-sided creatures,
Red claw and dripping fang,
The hideous, grinning features,
The awful mirth that rang,—
All vanished. Starless, boundless,
The night stretched o'er my head.
In the gray dawn, soulless, soundless,
I sat alone with my dead.

Then rustling forms drew nearer.
By the faint approaching day
The frightful things grew clearer,—
Great, unclean birds of prey
And carrion beasts, that waited
Until, on the booty rare,
Their hunger foul should be sated
With my poor Past, lying there.
Oh, I, too, sullen-hearted,
No word of anguish said;
Till bird and beast departed
I waited—dumb—by the dead.
The white east flickered with fire,
A lark flew singing by,
The glad light mounted higher,
Up-spread o'er all the sky.
My burden, fair and human,

Still rested on my hands,
When lo! a gracious Woman,
Swift walking o'er the sands,

Until she stood before me,
Breathed words of hope and cheer;
Her radiant eyes were o'er me,
Her presence warm and near,
And at her voice—oh, wonder!—
The dead herself awoke;
The birds no longer shunned her,
She smiled, and moved, and spoke,
Then, "FUTURE" named, to guide me
She softly sprang away;
The Woman stayed beside me—
Sun rose—it was full day.

NOT IN THE WHIRLWIND.

A poet sat in his oaken chair,
The pen in his eager hand,
Awaiting the voice that should declare
His Lord's divine command.
The sad winds sobbed against the pane,
The tempest's tramp he heard
As it scourged the night with a hissing rain—
But the Poet wrote never a word.
Then came a burst of martial mirth,
And mighty cannon roared
Till they shook the beams of the steadfast earth—
'Twas not the voice of the Lord.

In the Poet's heart a memory rose
Of love's first passionate thrill
That, kindling, grows as the red fire glows—
But the pen was idle, still;
When lo, a timid voice at the door,
And a child, with sweet delight,
Called "Father!" and "Father!" over and o'er—
The poem was written that night.

DIAPASON.

On the crags of a far-off mountain-top
At earliest dawn a snowflake fell;
The North Wind stooped and cried to her, "Stop!
There is room in my icy halls to dwell!"
The snowflake gleamed like a crystal clear,
Then wept herself to a single tear,
Paused, trembled, and slowly began to glide
Adown the slopes of the mountain-side.
Desolate ledges, frost-riven and bare,
A tiny rivulet bore on their breast;
Cloud-gray mosses and lichens fair
Mutely besought her to slumber and rest.
The rivulet shone in the morning sun,
And touching them tenderly, one by one,

With dewy lips, like the mountain mist,
Each waiting face as she passed she kissed.
Among the shadows of pine and fir
A stream danced merrily on her way;
A thrush from his hermitage sang to her:
"Why dost thou haste? Sweet messenger, stay!"
The noontide shadows were cool and deep,
The pathway stony, the hillside steep,
The bird still chanted with all his art—
But the stream ran on, with his song in her heart.

Through broadening meadow and corn-land bright,
Past smoke-palled city and flowery lea,
A river rolled on, in the fading light,
Majestic, serene, as she neared the sea.
The sins and uncleanness of many she bore
To the outstretched arms of the waiting shore,
Till moonlight followed the sunset glow
And her crimson waves were as white as snow.

On the lonely ledges of Appledore
I listen again to the ocean's song,
And lo! in its music I hear once more
The North Wind's clarion, loud and long.
In that solemn refrain that never shall end
The murmurs of swaying fir-trees blend,
The brooklet's merry ripple and rush,
The evening hymn of the hermit thrush,
The undertone of the mountain pine,—
The deep sweet voice of a love divine.

CHAMOUNIX.

Within Thy holy temple have I strayed
E'en as a weary child, who from the heat
And noonday glare hath timid refuge sought
In some cathedral's vast and shadowy aisle,
And trembling, awestruck, croucheth in his rags
Where high upreared a mighty pillar stands.
Mine eyes I lift unto the hills, from whence
Cometh my help. The murmuring firs stretch forth
Their myriad tiny crosses o'er my head;
Deep rolls the organ peal of thunder down
The echoing vale, while clouds of incense float
Around the great white altar set on high.

So lift my heart, O God, and purify
My thought, that when I walk once more
Amid the busy, anxious, struggling throng,
One cup of water from these springs of life,
One ray of sunlight from these golden days,
One jewel from the mountain's spotless brow,
As tokens of Thy beauty, I may bear
To little ones who toil, and long for rest.

IN THE MORNING.

Twas morn,
And day was born.
Bright in the west the stars still burned,
But ever, as the great earth turned,
The eastern mountain-tops grew dark
Against the rosy heaven—and hark!
A single note from flute-toned thrush
Drops downward through the twilight hush;
Half praise, half prayer, I heard the song:
“Oh, sweet, sweet,
Oh, life is sweet, and joy is long!”
The sun
Touched one by one
The firs along the distant crest,—
A silent host, with lance at rest;

Flashed all the world with jewels rare,
Quivered with joy the maiden-hair
Beside the brook that downward sprang
And rippling o’er its mosses, sang
With silvery laugh the same glad song:
“Oh, sweet, sweet,
Oh, life is sweet, and joy is long!”
When lo!
Swift, to and fro,

A sombre shadow crossed its path,
Deep thunders rolled in awful wrath,
The thrush beneath the fir-trees crept,
The maiden-hair bowed low and wept;
The heavens were black, the earth was gray
The hills all blanched in the spectral day,—
The night-wind rose, and wailed this song:
“Oh, long, long,
Oh, joy is fleeting, life so long!”
Behold,
A shaft of gold
Shot through the wrack of cloud and storm,
The heart of heaven beat quick and warm;

From bird and stream, with myriad tongue,
The glad day carolled, laughed, and sung.
’Twas morning still! Her tear-drops bright
The maiden-hair raised to the light;
I heard, half prayer, half praise, the song:
“Oh, sweet, sweet,
Oh, life is sweet, and joy is long!”

MARIGOLD.

Marigold, marigold, wi' thy wee cup o' gold,
What is it mak's thee sae bonnie an' gay?
Sunshine has drappit, an' filled up my cup o' gold
Fu' to the brim wi' the licht o' the day.
Marigold, marigold, surely ye canna hold
A' the sweet sunshine 'at draps frae the sky!
Nay, I've a muckle o' licht 'at I winna hold,
Saved up for you an' for ithers to try.
Marigold, marigold, stan'in' there a' sae bold,
What's in thy een, 'at mak's 'em sae bright?
I keep 'em wide open, stan'in' here a' sae bold,
Luikin' at heaven frae mornin' to nicht.

Marigold, marigold, bairnie wi' cup o' gold,
What's i' thy hert, 'at mak's thee sae strang?
Trust i' the One 'at gave me my cup o' gold
Lattin' Him love me, a' the day lang.

“SEVENTEEN, EIGHTEEN, MAID’S A-WAITING!”

Eighteen years ago the sunshine
Laughed to find a baby face;
Laughed to see the blue eyes sober,
In that golden, glad October,
Softly kissed the wisps of hair,
Softly kissed, and lingered there,
Like an answer to a prayer,
Like a whispered benediction,
Token bright of heavenly grace.
Standing on life’s sunlit threshold,
Gazing forth with eyes of blue
On the great round world before her,
On the kind skies brooding o’er her,—
From the baby hair the light
Never has departed quite;

Still it lingers, pure and bright.
Yes, the little maid is waiting,
With a purpose grand and true;
Waiting for whate’er the Father
Calls His child to do and bear;
Waiting, as a thirsty flower
Waits the morning dew and shower.

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