The Complete Poems

Edgar Allan Poe

Edited by Neil Azevedo
The Complete Poems of Edgar Allan Poe

EDGAR ALLAN POE

William Ralph Press

Omaha
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Also from William Ralph Press
Edgar Allan Poe was born on January 19th in Boston, Massachusetts in 1809, and died in his adopted home of Baltimore, Maryland on October 7th, 1849, making him the first American writer in this series.

The critical estimation of Poe’s work has increased dramatically over the course of my lifetime, which has been satisfying to observe, as he was for me—as I believe for so many lovers of literature—an early favorite, particularly because of his verse, which is rich with sonic texture and gothic subject matter: insanity, darkness, ghosts, death, etc. It is also quite manageable to read in its entirety at around 75 poems depending on how many of those of questionable authorship or in various stages of completion one is willing to include in the official oeuvre. (In fact, it has been some time since I’ve heard the old familiar slight that his popularity in France during the 19th century was perhaps due to his writing gaining something of substance from Charles Baudelaire’s translations.) While perhaps not quite as dramatically prescient in new utterance, form or philosophical depth as Walt Whitman or Emily Dickinson, he certainly was as wise an observer of human nature, and equally brilliant at capturing the psychological nuances of passionate feeling and the frustrating process of understanding human experience. He also had an exquisite ear for language which has made his poems some of the most enjoyable to memorize and recite of all those in English-language verse: “The Raven” and “Annabelle Lee” immediately spring to mind, as does “The Bells.”
once beautifully put to music by the American folk singer, Phil Ochs, to offer an example of the breadth of Poe’s influence and the joy with which generations of readers embrace his poems. And to be sure, beyond the varying critical estimation of his output, there is no questioning his popularity. How many 19th century writers get such unique accolades as the naming of a professional sport franchise’s mascot, or their very own bobble head, after all? And in that spirit I am delighted to offer these 75 selections as an official offering of his full poetic output for your personal assessment and, I am confident, enjoyment.

I would like to thank the Edgar Allan Poe Society of Baltimore for meticulously collecting such a critically sound and exhaustive record of all the versions of Poe’s poems, and for making them available for inexpensive study. And thank you for purchasing this volume and supporting the Reader’s Library.

—Neil Azevedo (1/1/2015)
Poetry

Last night, with many cares and toils oppress’d
Weary, I laid me on a couch to rest—
Oh, Tempora! Oh, Mores!

Oh Times! Oh Manners! It is my opinion
That you are changing sadly your dominion—
I mean the reign of manners hath long ceased,
For men have none at all, or bad at least;
And as for times, although ‘t is said by many
The “good old times” were far the worst of any,
Of which sound doctrine I believe each tittle,
Yet still I think these worse than them a little.
I’ve been a thinking, isn’t that the phrase?
—I like your Yankee words and Yankee ways—

I’ve been a thinking whether it were best
To take things seriously or all in jest;
Whether with Heraclitus of yore
To weep, as he did, till his eyes were sore,
Or rather laugh with him, that queer philosopher,
Democritus of Thrace, who used to toss over
The page of life and grin at the dog-ears,
As though he’d say, “Why who the devil cares?”

This is a question which, oh heaven, withdraw
The luckless query from a member’s claw!
Instead of two sides, Job has nearly eight,
Each fit to furnish forth four hours debate.
What shall be done? I’ll lay it on the table,
And take the matter up when I’m more able,
And in the meantime, to prevent all bother,
I’ll neither laugh with one or cry with t’other,
Nor deal in flattery or aspersions foul,
But, taking one by each hand, merely growl.

Ah growl, say you, my friend, and pray at what?
Why really, sir, I almost had forgot—
But damn it, sir, I deem it a disgrace
That things should stare us boldly in the face,
And daily strut the street with bows and scrapes,
Who would be men by imitating apes.
I beg your pardon, reader, for the oath,
The monkey made me swear, though something loath;
I’m apt to be discursive in my style,
But pray be patient: yet a little while
Will change me, and as politicians do
I’ll mend my manners and my measures too.

Of all the cities, and I’ve seen no few,—
For I have travelled, friend, as well as you,—
I don’t remember one, upon my soul,
But take it generally upon the whole,
(As members say they like their logic taken
Because divided it may chance be shaken)
So pat, agreeable, and vastly proper
As this for a neat, frisky counter-hopper;
Here he may revel to his heart’s content,
Flounce like a fish in his own element,
Toss back his fine curls from their forehead fair
And hop o’er counters with a Vestris air,
Complete at night what he began A.M.,
And having cheated ladies, dance with them;
For at a ball what fair one can escape
The pretty little hand that sold her tape,
Or who so cold, so callous to refuse
The youth who cut the ribbon for her shoes!

One of these fish, par excellence the beau,
God help me, it has been my lot to know,
At least by sight, for I’m a timid man
And always keep from laughing when I can;
But speak to him, he’ll make you such grimace.
Lord! to be grave exceeds the power of face.
The hearts of all the ladies are with him,
Their bright eyes on his Tom and Jerry brim
And dove-tailed coat, obtained at cost; while then
Those won’t turn on anything like men.

His very voice is musical delight,
His form once seen becomes a part of sight,
In short his shirt-collar, his look, his tone is
The “beau ideal” fancied for Adonis.
Philosophers have often held dispute
As to the seat of thought in man and brute,
For that the power of thought attend the latter
My friend, the beau, hath made a settled matter,
And spite all dogmas current in all ages,
One settled fact is better than ten sages.

For he does think, although I’m oft in doubt
If I can tell exactly what about.
Ah yes! his little foot and ankle trim,
‘T is there the seat of reason lies in him;
A wise philosopher would shake his head,
He then, of course, must shake his foot instead.
At me in vengeance shall that foot be shaken—
Another proof of thought, I’m not mistaken—
Because to his cat’s eyes I hold a glass
And let him see himself a proper ass?
I think he’ll take this likeness to himself,
But if he won’t he shall, the stupid elf,
And, lest the guessing throw the fool in fits,
I close the portrait with the name of Pitts.
To Margaret

Who hath seduced thee to this foul revolt
From the pure well of beauty undefiled?
So banish from true wisdom to prefer
Such squalid wit to honourable rhyme?
To write? To scribble? Nonsense and no more?
I will not write upon this argument
To write is human—not to write divine.

Line 1: Milton Par. Lost Bk. I
Line 2: Somebody
Lines 3 and 4: Cowper’s Task, Book I
Line 5: Shakespeare
Line 6: do. Trolius & Cressida
Line 7: Pope Essay on Man
To Octavia

When wit, and wine, and friends have met
And laughter crowns the festive hour
In vain I struggle to forget
Still does my heart confess thy power
   And fondly turn to thee!

But Octavia, do not strive to rob
My heart of all that soothes its pain,
The mournful hope that every throb
   Will make it break for thee!
Tamerlane

Kind solace in a dying hour!
   Such, father, is not (now) my theme—
I will not madly deem that power
   Of Earth may shrive me of the sin
   Unearthly pride hath revelled in—
I have no time to dote or dream:
You call it hope—that fire of fire!
It is but agony of desire:
If I can hope—O God! I can—
   Its fount is holier—more divine—
I would not call thee fool, old man,
   But such is not a gift of thine.
Know thou the secret of a spirit
   Bowed from its wild pride into shame
O yearning heart! I did inherit
   Thy withering portion with the fame,
The searing glory which hath shone
Amid the Jewels of my throne,
Halo of Hell! and with a pain
Not Hell shall make me fear again—
O craving heart, for the lost flowers
And sunshine of my summer hours!
The undying voice of that dead time,
With its interminable chime,
Rings, in the spirit of a spell,
Upon thy emptiness—a knell.

I have not always been as now:
The fevered diadem on my brow
   I claimed and won usurpingly—
Hath not the same fierce heirdom given
   Rome to the Cæsar—this to me?
   The heritage of a kingly mind,
And a proud spirit which hath striven
   Triumphantly with human kind.

On mountain soil I first drew life:
The mists of the Taglay have shed
   Nightly their dews upon my head,
And, I believe, the winged strife
And tumult of the headlong air
Have nestled in my very hair.

So late from Heaven—that dew—it fell
   (‘Mid dreams of an unholy night)
Upon me with the touch of Hell,
   While the red flashing of the light
From clouds that hung, like banners, o’er,
   Appeared to my half-closing eye
   The pageantry of monarchy;
And the deep trumpet-thunder’s roar
Came hurriedly upon me, telling  
Of human battle, where my voice,  
My own voice, silly child!—was swelling  
(O! how my spirit would rejoice,  
And leap within me at the cry)  
The battle-cry of Victory!

The rain came down upon my head  
Unsheltered—and the heavy wind  
Rendered me mad and deaf and blind.  
It was but man, I thought, who shed  
Laurels upon me: and the rush—  
The torrent of the chilly air  
Gurgled within my ear the crush  
Of empires—with the captive’s prayer—  
The hum of suitors—and the tone  
Of flattery ’round a sovereign’s throne.

My passions, from that hapless hour,  
Usurped a tyranny which men  
Have deemed since I have reached to power,  
My innate nature—be it so:  
But, father, there lived one who, then,  
Then—in my boyhood—when their fire  
Burned with a still intenser glow  
(For passion must, with youth, expire)  
E’en then who knew this iron heart  
In woman’s weakness had a part.
I have no words—alas!—to tell
The loveliness of loving well!
Nor would I now attempt to trace
The more than beauty of a face
Whose lineaments, upon my mind,
Are—shadows on th’ unstable wind:
Thus I remember having dwelt
Some page of early lore upon,
With loitering eye, till I have felt
The letters—with their meaning—melt
To fantasies—with none.

O, she was worthy of all love!
   Love—as in infancy was mine—
’Twas such as angel minds above
   Might envy; her young heart the shrine
On which my every hope and thought
   Were incense—then a goodly gift,
   For they were childish and upright—
Pure—as her young example taught:
Why did I leave it, and, adrift,
   Trust to the fire within, for light?

We grew in age—and love—together—
   Roaming the forest, and the wild;
My breast her shield in wintry weather—
   And, when the friendly sunshine smiled.
And she would mark the opening skies,
I saw no Heaven—but in her eyes.

Young Love’s first lesson is——the heart:
   For ‘mid that sunshine, and those smiles,
When, from our little cares apart,
   And laughing at her girlish wiles,
I’d throw me on her throbbing breast,
   And pour my spirit out in tears—
There was no need to speak the rest—
   No need to quiet any fears
Of her—who asked no reason why,
But turned on me her quiet eye!

Yet more than worthy of the love
My spirit struggled with, and strove
When, on the mountain peak, alone,
Ambition lent it a new tone—
I had no being—but in thee:
   The world, and all it did contain
In the earth—the air—the sea—
   Its joy—its little lot of pain
That was new pleasure—the ideal,
   Dim, vanities of dreams by night—
And dimmer nothings which were real—
   (Shadows—and a more shadowy light!)
Parted upon their misty wings,
   And, so, confusedly, became
   Thine image and—a name—a name!
Two separate—yet most intimate things.

I was ambitious—have you known

   The passion, father? You have not:
A cottager, I marked a throne
Of half the world as all my own,
   And murmured at such lowly lot—
But, just like any other dream,
   Upon the vapor of the dew
My own had past, did not the beam
   Of beauty which did while it thro’
The minute—the hour—the day—oppress
My mind with double loveliness.
We walked together on the crown
Of a high mountain which looked down
Afar from its proud natural towers
   Of rock and forest, on the hills—
The dwindled hills! begirt with bowers
   And shouting with a thousand rills.

I spoke to her of power and pride,
   But mystically—in such guise
That she might deem it nought beside
   The moment’s converse; in her eyes
I read, perhaps too carelessly—
   A mingled feeling with my own—
The flush on her bright cheek, to me
   Seemed to become a queenly throne
Too well that I should let it be
Light in the wilderness alone.

I wrapped myself in grandeur then,
And donned a visionary crown—
Yet it was not that Fantasy
Had thrown her mantle over me—
But that, among the rabble—men,
Lion ambition is chained down—
And crouches to a keeper’s hand—
Not so in deserts where the grand—
The wild—the terrible conspire
With their own breath to fan his fire.

Look ’round thee now on Samarcand!—
Is she not queen of Earth? her pride
Above all cities? in her hand
Their destinies? in all beside
Of glory which the world hath known
Stands she not nobly and alone?
Falling—her veriest stepping-stone
Shall form the pedestal of a throne—
And who her sovereign? Timour—he
Whom the astonished people saw
Striding o’er empires haughtily
A diademed outlaw!

O, human love! thou spirit given,
On Earth, of all we hope in Heaven!
Which fall’st into the soul like rain
Upon the Siroc-withered plain,
And, failing in thy power to bless,
But leav’st the heart a wilderness!
Idea! which bindest life around
With music of so strange a sound
And beauty of so wild a birth—
Farewell! for I have won the Earth.

When Hope, the eagle that towered, could see
   No cliff beyond him in the sky,
His pinions were bent droopingly—
   And homeward turned his softened eye.
‘Twas sunset: When the sun will part
There comes a sullenness of heart
To him who still would look upon
The glory of the summer sun.
That soul will hate the ev’ning mist
So often lovely, and will list
To the sound of the coming darkness (known
To those whose spirits hearken) as one
Who, in a dream of night, would fly,
But cannot, from a danger nigh.

What tho’ the moon—tho’ the white moon
Shed all the splendor of her noon,
*Her* smile is chilly—and *her* beam,
In that time of dreariness, will seem
(So like you gather in your breath)
A portrait taken after death.
And boyhood is a summer sun
Whose waning is the dreariest one—
For all we live to know is known,
And all we seek to keep hath flown—
Let life, then, as the day-flower, fall
With the noon-day beauty—which is all.

I reached my home—my home no more—
For all had flown who made it so.
I passed from out its mossy door,
And, tho’ my tread was soft and low,
A voice came from the threshold stone
Of one whom I had earlier known—
O, I defy thee, Hell, to show
On beds of fire that burn below,
An humbler heart—a deeper woe.

Father, I firmly do believe—
I know—for Death who comes for me
From regions of the blest afar,
Where there is nothing to deceive,
Hath left his iron gate ajar.
And rays of truth you cannot see
Are flashing thro’ Eternity——
I do believe that Eblis hath
A snare in every human path—
Else how, when in the holy grove
I wandered of the idol, Love,—
Who daily scents his snowy wings
With incense of burnt-offerings

From the most unpolluted things,
Whose pleasant bowers are yet so riven
Above with trellised rays from Heaven
No mote may shun—no tiniest fly—
The light’ning of his eagle eye—
How was it that Ambition crept,
   Unseen, amid the revels there,
Till growing bold, he laughed and leapt
   In the tangles of Love’s very hair!
I saw thee on thy bridal day—
   When a burning blush came o’er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
   The world all love before thee:

And in thine eye a kindling light
   (Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
   Of Loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame—
   As such it well may pass—
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
   In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
   When that deep blush would come o’er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
   The world all love before thee.
Dreams

Oh! that my young life were a lasting dream!
My spirit not awakening, till the beam
Of an Eternity should bring the morrow.
Yes! though that long dream were of hopeless sorrow,
‘Twere better than the cold reality
Of waking life, to him whose heart must be,
And hath been still, upon the lovely earth,
A chaos of deep passion, from his birth.
But should it be—that dream eternally
Continuing—as dreams have been to me
In my young boyhood—should it thus be given,
‘Twere folly still to hope for higher Heaven.
For I have reveled when the sun was bright
I’ the summer sky, in dreams of living light
And loveliness,—have left my very heart
In climes of my imagining, apart
From mine own home, with beings that have been
Of mine own thought—what more could I have seen?
‘Twas once—and only once—and the wild hour
From my remembrance shall not pass—some power
Or spell had bound me—’twas the chilly wind
Came o’er me in the night, and left behind
Its image on my spirit—or the moon
Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon
Too coldly—or the stars—howe’er it was
That dream was that that night-wind—let it pass.

I have been happy, though in a dream.
I have been happy—and I love the theme:
Dreams! in their vivid coloring of life
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife
Of semblance with reality which brings
To the delirious eye, more lovely things
Of Paradise and Love—and all my own!—
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.
Spirits of the Dead

I

Thy soul shall find itself alone
‘Mid dark thoughts of the grey tombstone
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

II

Be silent in that solitude
Which is not loneliness—for then
The spirits of the dead who stood
In life before thee are again
In death around thee—and their will
Shall overshadow thee: be still.

III

The night—tho’ clear—shall frown—
And the stars shall not look down
From their high thrones in the Heaven,
With light like Hope to mortals given—
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.

IV

Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish—
Now are visions ne’er to vanish—
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more—like dew-drops from the grass.

V

The breeze—the breath of God—is still—
And the mist upon the hill
Shadowy—shadowy—yet unbroken,
   Is a symbol and a token—
   How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!
Evening Star

‘Twas noontide of summer,
   And midtime of night,
And stars, in their orbits,
   Shone pale, through the light
Of the brighter, cold moon.
   ‘Mid planets her slaves,
Herself in the Heavens,
   Her beam on the waves.
I gazed awhile
   On her cold smile;
Too cold—too cold for me—
   There passed, as a shroud,
A fleecy cloud,
And I turned away to thee,
   Proud Evening Star,
In thy glory afar
And dearer thy beam shall be;
   For joy to my heart
Is the proud part
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,
   And more I admire
Thy distant fire,
Than that colder, lowly light.
A dark unfathomed tide
Of interminable pride—
A mystery, and a dream,
Should my early life seem;
I say that dream was fraught
With a wild and waking thought
Of beings that have been,
Which my spirit hath not seen,
Had I let them pass me by,
With a dreaming eye!
Let none of earth inherit
That vision on my spirit;
Those thoughts I would control,
As a spell upon his soul:
For that bright hope at last
And that light time have past,
And my worldly rest hath gone
With a sigh as it passed on:
I care not though it perish
With a thought I then did cherish.
How often we forget all time, when lone
Admiring Nature’s universal throne;
Her woods—her wilds—her mountains—the intense
Reply of Hers to Our intelligence!

I

In youth I have known one with whom the Earth
In secret communing held—as he with it,
In daylight, and in beauty, from his birth:
Whose fervid, flickering torch of life was lit
From the sun and stars, whence he had drawn forth
A passionate light such for his spirit was fit—
And yet that spirit knew—not in the hour
Of its own fervor—what had o’er it power.

II

Perhaps it may be that my mind is wrought
To a fervor by the moonbeam that hangs o’er,
But I will half believe that wild light fraught
With more of sovereignty than ancient lore
Hath ever told—or is it of a thought
The unembodied essence, and no more
That with a quickening spell doth o’er us pass
As dew of the night-time, o’er the summer grass?

III

Doth o’er us pass, when, as th’ expanding eye
To the loved object—so the tear to the lid
Will start, which lately slept in apathy?
And yet it need not be—(that object) hid
From us in life—but common—which doth lie
Each hour before us—but then only bid
With a strange sound, as of a harp-string broken
’T awake us—’Tis a symbol and a token—

IV

Of what in other worlds shall be—and given
In beauty by our God, to those alone
Who otherwise would fall from life and Heaven
Drawn by their heart’s passion, and that tone,
That high tone of the spirit which hath striven
Though not with Faith—with godliness—whose throne
With desperate energy ‘t hath beaten down;
Wearing its own deep feeling as a crown.
A Dream

In visions of the dark night
    I have dreamed of joy departed—
But a waking dream of life and light
    Hath left me broken-hearted.

Ah! what is not a dream by day
    To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
    Turned back upon the past?

That holy dream—that holy dream,
    While all the world were chiding,
Hath cheered me as a lovely beam,
    A lonely spirit guiding.

What though that light, thro’ storm and night,
    So trembled from afar—
What could there be more purely bright
    In Truth’s day star?
"The Happiest Day—The Happiest Hour"

I
The happiest day—the happiest hour
    My seared and blighted heart hath known,
The highest hope of pride and power,
    I feel hath flown.

II
Of power! said I? Yes! such I ween
    But they have vanished long, alas!
The visions of my youth have been—
    But let them pass.

III
And pride, what have I now with thee?
    Another brow may ev’n inherit
The venom thou hast poured on me—
    Be still my spirit!

IV
The happiest day—the happiest hour
Mine eyes shall see—have ever seen
The brightest glance of pride and power
I feel have been:

But were that hope of pride and power
Now offered with the pain
Ev’n then I felt—that brightest hour
I would not live again:

For on its wing was dark alloy
And as it fluttered—fell
An essence—powerful to destroy
A soul that knew it well.
The Lake: To——-

In spring of youth it was my lot  
To haunt of the wide world a spot  
The which I could not love the less—  
So lovely was the loneliness  
Of a wild lake, with black rock bound,  
And the tall pines that towered around.

But when the Night had thrown her pall  
Upon the spot, as upon all,  
And the mystic wind went by  
Murmuring in melody—  
Then—ah, then, I would awake  
To the terror of the lone lake.

Yet that terror was not fright,  
But a tremulous delight—  
A feeling not the jewelled mine  
Could teach or bribe me to define—  
Nor Love—although the Love were thine.

Death was in that poisonous wave,  
And in its gulf a fitting grave  
For him who thence could solace bring  
To his lone imagining—
Whose solitary soul could make
An Eden of that dim lake.
To——— (I Heed Not That My Earthly Lot...)

I heed not that my earthly lot
Hath—little of Earth in it—
That years of love have been forgot
In the hatred of a minute:—
I mourn not that the desolate
Are happier, sweet, than I,
But that you sorrow for my fate
Who am a passer-by.
Hymn to Aristogeiton and Harmodius

Translation from the Greek

I
Wreathed in myrtle, my sword I’ll conceal,
Like those champions devoted and brave,
When they plunged in the tyrant their steel,
And to Athens deliverance gave.

II
Beloved heroes! your deathless souls roam
In the joy breathing isles of the blest;
Where the mighty of old have their home—
Where Achilles and Diomed rest.

III
In fresh myrtle my blade I’ll entwine,
Like Harmodius, the gallant and good,
When he made at the tutelar shrine
A libation of Tyranny’s blood.
Ye deliverers of Athens from shame!
   Ye avengers of Liberty’s wrongs!
Endless ages shall cherish your fame,
   Embalmed in their echoing songs!
Sonnet: To Science

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art!
   Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet’s heart,
   Vulture, whose wings are dull realities
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
   Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,
   Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing!
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
   And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
   Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?
Al Aaraaf

A star was discovered by Tycho Brahe which appeared suddenly in the heavens—attained, in a few days, a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter—then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since.

Part I

O! nothing earthly save the ray
(Thrown back from flowers) of Beauty’s eye,
As in those gardens where the day
Springs from the gems of Circassy—
O! nothing earthly save the thrill
Of melody in woodland rill—
Or (music of the passion-hearted)
Joy’s voice so peacefully departed
That like the murmur in the shell,
Its echo dwelleth and will dwell—
O! nothing of the dross of ours—
Yet all the beauty—all the flowers
That list our Love, and deck our bowers—
Adorn yon world afar, afar—
The wandering star.

‘Twas a sweet time for Nesace—for there
Her world lay lolling on the golden air,
Near four bright suns—a temporary rest—
An oasis in desert of the blest.
Away away—’mid seas of rays that roll
Empyrean splendor o’er th’ unchained soul—
The soul that scarce (the billows are so dense)
Can struggle to its destin’d eminence—
To distant spheres, from time to time, she rode,
And late to ours, the favour’d one of God—
But, now, the ruler of an anchor’d realm,
She throws aside the sceptre—leaves the helm,
And, amid incense and high spiritual hymns,
Laves in quadruple light her angel limbs.

Now happiest, loveliest in yon lovely Earth,
Whence sprang the “Idea of Beauty” into birth,
(Falling in wreaths thro’ many a startled star,
Like woman’s hair ‘mid pearls, until, afar,
It lit on hills Achaian, and there dwelt),
She look’d into Infinity—and knelt.
Rich clouds, for canopies, about her curled—
Fit emblems of the model of her world—
Seen but in beauty—not impeding sight—
Of other beauty glittering thro’ the light—
A wreath that twined each starry form around,
And all the opal’d air in color bound.

All hurriedly she knelt upon a bed
Of flowers: of lilies such as rear’d the head
On the fair Capo Deucato, and sprang
So eagerly around about to hang
Upon the flying footsteps of—deep pride—
Of her who lov’d a mortal—and so died.
The Sephalica, budding with young bees,
Uprear’d its purple stem around her knees:
And gemmy flower, of Trebizond misnam’d—
Inmate of highest stars, where erst it sham’d
All other loveliness: its honied dew
(The fabled nectar that the heathen knew)
Deliriously sweet, was dropp’d from Heaven,
And fell on gardens of the unforgiven
In Trebizond—and on a sunny flower
So like its own above that, to this hour,
It still remaineth, torturing the bee
With madness, and unwonted reverie:
In Heaven, and all its environs, the leaf
And blossom of the fairy plant, in grief
Disconsolate linger—grief that hangs her head,
Repenting follies that full long have fled,
Heaving her white breast to the balmy air,
Like guilty beauty, chasten’d, and more fair:
Nyctanthes too, as sacred as the light
She fears to perfume, perfuming the night:
And Clytia pondering between many a sun,  
While pettish tears adown her petals run:  
And that aspiring flower that sprang on Earth—  
And died, ere scarce exalted into birth,  
Bursting its odorous heart in spirit to wing  
Its way to Heaven, from garden of a king:  
And Valisnerian lotus thither flown  
From struggling with the waters of the Rhone:  
And thy most lovely purple perfume, Zante!  
Isola d’oro!—Fior di Levante!  
And the Nelumbo bud that floats for ever  
With Indian Cupid down the holy river—  
Fair flowers, and fairy! to whose care is given  
To bear the Goddess’ song, in odors, up to Heaven:

“Spirit! that dwellest where,  
    In the deep sky,  
The terrible and fair,  
    In beauty vie!  
Beyond the line of blue—  
    The boundary of the star  
Which turneth at the view  
    Of thy barrier and thy bar—  
Of the barrier overgone  
    By the comets who were cast  
From their pride, and from their throne  
    To be drudges till the last—  
To be carriers of fire
(The red fire of their heart)
With speed that may not tire
   And with pain that shall not part—
Who livest—*that* we know—
   In Eternity—we feel—
But the shadow of whose brow
   What spirit shall reveal?
Tho’ the beings whom thy Nesace,
   Thy messenger hath known
Have dream’d for thy Infinity
   A model of their own—
Thy will is done, O God!
   The star hath ridden high
Thro’ many a tempest, but she rode
   Beneath thy burning eye;
And here, in thought, to thee—
   In thought that can alone
Ascend thy empire and so be
   A partner of thy throne—
By winged Fantasy,
   My embassy is given,
Till secrecy shall knowledge be
   In the environs of Heaven.”

She ceas’d—and buried then her burning cheek
Abash’d, amid the lilies there, to seek
A shelter from the fervor of His eye;
For the stars trembled at the Deity.
She stirr’d not—breath’d not—for a voice was there
How solemnly pervading the calm air!
A sound of silence on the startled ear
Which dreamy poets name “the music of the sphere.”
Ours is a world of words: Quiet we call
“Silence”—which is the merest word of all.
All Nature speaks, and ev’n ideal things
Flap shadowy sounds from the visionary wings—
But ah! not so when, thus, in realms on high
The eternal voice of God is passing by,
And the red winds are withering in the sky!

“What tho’ in worlds which sightless cycles run,
Link’d to a little system, and one sun—
Where all my love is folly, and the crowd
Still think my terrors but the thunder cloud,
The storm, the earthquake, and the ocean-wrath
(Ah! will they cross me in my angrier path?)
What tho’ in worlds which own a single sun
The sands of time grow dimmer as they run,
Yet thine is my resplendency, so given
To bear my secrets thro’ the upper Heaven.
Leave tenantless thy crystal home, and fly,
With all thy train, athwart the moony sky—
Apart—like fire-flies in Sicilian night,
And wing to other worlds another light!
Divulge the secrets of thy embassy
To the proud orbs that twinkle—and so be
To ev’ry heart a barrier and a ban
Lest the stars totter in the guilt of man!”

Up rose the maiden in the yellow night,
The single-mooned eve!-on Earth we plight
Our faith to one love—and one moon adore—
The birth-place of young Beauty had no more.

As sprang that yellow star from downy hours,
Up rose the maiden from her shrine of flowers,
And bent o’er sheeny mountain and dim plain
Her way—but left not yet her Therasæan reign.

Part II

High on a mountain of enamell’d head—
Such as the drowsy shepherd on his bed
Of giant pasturage lying at his ease,
Raising his heavy eyelid, starts and sees
With many a mutter’d “hope to be forgiven,”
What time the moon is quadrated in Heaven—
Of rosy head, that towering far away
Into the sunlit ether, caught the ray
Of sunken suns at eve—at noon of night,
While the moon danc’d with the fair stranger light—
Uprear’d upon such height arose a pile
Of gorgeous columns on th’ uuburthen’d air,
Flashing from Parian marble that twin smile
Far down upon the wave that sparkled there,
And nursled the young mountain in its lair.
Of molten stars their pavement, such as fall
Thro’ the ebon air, besilvering the pall
Of their own dissolution, while they die—
Adorning then the dwellings of the sky.
A dome, by linked light from Heaven let down,
Sat gently on these columns as a crown—
A window of one circular diamond, there,
Look’d out above into the purple air
And rays from God shot down that meteor chain
And hallow’d all the beauty twice again,
Save when, between th’ Empyrean and that ring,
Some eager spirit flapp’d his dusky wing.
But on the pillars Seraph eyes have seen
The dimness of this world: that greyish green
That Nature loves the best for Beauty’s grave
Lurk’d in each cornice, round each architrave—
And every sculptured cherub thereabout
That from his marble dwelling peered out,
Seem’d earthly in the shadow of his niche—
Achaian statues in a world so rich!
Friezes from Tadmor and Persepolis—
From Balbec, and the stilly, clear abyss
Of beautiful Gomorrah! Oh, the wave
Is now upon thee—but too late to save!
Sound loves to revel in a summer night:
Witness the murmur of the grey twilight
That stole upon the ear, in Eyraco,
Of many a wild star-gazer long ago—
That stealeth ever on the ear of him
Who, musing, gazeth on the distance dim,
And sees the darkness coming as a cloud—
Is not its form—its voice—most palpable and loud?

But what is this?—it cometh—and it brings
A music with it—’tis the rush of wings—
A pause—and then a sweeping, falling strain,
And Nesace is in her halls again.
From the wild energy of wanton haste
Her cheeks were flushing, and her lips apart;
The zone that clung around her gentle waist
Had burst beneath the heaving of her heart.
Within the centre of that hall to breathe
She paus’d and panted, Zanthe! all beneath,
The fairy light that kiss’d her golden hair
And long’d to rest, yet could but sparkle there!

Young flowers were whispering in melody
To happy flowers that night—and tree to tree;
Fountains were gushing music as they fell
In many a star-lit grove, or moon-lit dell;
Yet silence came upon material things—
Fair flowers, bright waterfalls and angel wings—
And sound alone that from the spirit sprang
Bore burthen to the charm the maiden sang:

"Neath blue-bell or streamer—
   Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
   The moonbeam away—
Bright beings! that ponder,
   With half-closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
   Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance thro’ the shade, and
   Come down to your brow
Like—eyes of the maiden
   Who calls on you now—
Arise! from your dreaming
   In violet bowers,
To duty beseeming
   These star-litten hours—
And shake from your tresses
   Encumber’d with dew,
The breath of those kisses
   That cumber them too—
(O! how, without you, Love!
   Could angels be blest?)
Those kisses of true love
   That lull’d ye to rest!
Up! shake from your wing
Each hindering thing:
The dew of the night—
   It would weigh down your flight;
And true love caresses—
   O! leave them apart!
They are light on the tresses,
   But lead on the heart.

Ligeia! Ligeia!
   My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
   Will to melody run,
O! is it thy will
   On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
   Like the lone Albatross,
Incumbent on night
   (As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
   On the harmony there?

Ligeia! wherever
   Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
   Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
   In a dreamy sleep—
But the strains still arise
Which *thy* vigilance keep—
The sound of the rain
    Which leaps down to the flower,
And dances again
    In the rhythm of the shower—
The murmur that springs
    From the growing of grass
Are the music of things—
    But are modell’d, alas!—
Away, then, my dearest,
    O! hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
    Beneath the moon-ray—
To lone lake that smiles,
    In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
    That enjewel its breast—
Where wild flowers, creeping,
    Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
    Full many a maid—
Some have left the cool glade, and
    Have slept with the bee—
Arouse them, my maiden,
    On moorland and lea—
Go! breathe on their slumber,
    All softly in ear,
The musical number
They slumber’d to hear—
For what can awaken
An angel so soon
Whose sleep hath been taken
Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
Of witchery may test,
The rhythmical number
Which lull’d him to rest?”

Spirits in wing, and angels to the view,
A thousand seraphs burst th’ Empyrean thro’,
Young dreams still hovering on their drowsy flight—
Seraphs in all but “Knowledge,” the keen light
That fell, refracted, thro’ thy bounds afar,
O death! from eye of God upon that star;
Sweet was that error—sweeter still that death—
Sweet was that error—ev’n with us the breath
Of Science dims the mirror of our joy—
To them ’twere the Simoom, and would destroy—
For what (to them) availeth it to know
That Truth is Falsehood—or that Bliss is Woe?
Sweet was their death—with them to die was rife
With the last ecstasy of satiate life—
Beyond that death no immortality—
But sleep that pondereth and is not “to be”—
And there—oh! may my weary spirit dwell—
Apart from Heaven’s Eternity—and yet how far from Hell!
What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two: they fell: for heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts.
A maiden-angel and her seraph-lover—
O! where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen—’mid “tears of perfect moan.”

He was a goodly spirit—he who fell:
A wanderer by mossy-mantled well—
A gazer on the lights that shine above—
A dreamer in the moonbeam by his love:
What wonder? for each star is eye-like there,
And looks so sweetly down on Beauty’s hair—
And they, and ev’ry mossy spring were holy
To his love-haunted heart and melancholy.
The night had found (to him a night of wo)
Upon a mountain crag, young Angelo—
Beetling it bends athwart the solemn sky,
And scowls on starry worlds that down beneath it lie.
Here sate he with his love—his dark eye bent
With eagle gaze along the firmament:
Now turn’d it upon her—but ever then
It trembled to the orb of EARTH again.

“Ianthe, dearest, see! how dim that ray!
How lovely ’tis to look so far away!”
She seemed not thus upon that autumn eve
I left her gorgeous halls—nor mourned to leave,
That eve—that eve—I should remember well—
The sun-ray dropped, in Lemnos, with a spell
On th’ Arabesque carving of a gilded hall
Wherein I sate, and on the draperied wall—
And on my eyelids—O, the heavy light!
How drowsily it weighed them into night!
On flowers, before, and mist, and love they ran
With Persian Saadi in his Gulistan:
But O, that light!—I slumber’d—Death, the while,
Stole o’er my senses in that lovely isle
So softly that no single silken hair
Awoke that slept—or knew that he was there.

“The last spot of Earth’s orb I trod upon
Was a proud temple called the Parthenon.
More beauty clung around her columned wall
Then even thy glowing bosom beats withal,
And when old Time my wing did disenthral
Thence sprang I—as the eagle from his tower,
And years I left behind me in an hour.
What time upon her airy bounds I hung,
One half the garden of her globe was flung
Unrolling as a chart unto my view—
Tenantless cities of the desert too!
Ianthe, beauty crowded on me then,
And half I wished to be again of men.”
“My Angelo! and why of them to be?
A brighter dwelling-place is here for thee—
And greener fields than in yon world above,
And woman’s loveliness—and passionate love.”

“But list, Ianthe! when the air so soft
Failed, as my pennon’d spirit leapt aloft,
Perhaps my brain grew dizzy—but the world
I left so late was into chaos hurled,
Sprang from her station, on the winds apart,
And roll’d a flame, the fiery Heaven athwart.
Methought, my sweet one, then I ceased to soar,
And fell—not swiftly as I rose before,
But with a downward, tremulous motion thro’
Light, brazen rays, this golden star unto!
Nor long the measure of my falling hours,
For nearest of all stars was thine to ours—
Dread star! that came, amid a night of mirth,
A red Dædalion on the timid Earth.”

“We came—and to thy Earth—but not to us
Be given our lady’s bidding to discuss:
We came, my love; around, above, below,
Gay fire-fly of the night we come and go,
Nor ask a reason save the angel-nod
She grants to us as granted by her God—
But, Angelo, than thine grey Time unfurl’d
Never his fairy wing o’er fairier world!”
Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
When first Al Aaraaf knew her course to be
Headlong thitherward o’er the starry sea—
But when its glory swell’d upon the sky,
As glowing Beauty’s bust beneath man’s eye,
We paus’d before the heritage of men,
And thy star trembled—as doth Beauty then!

Thus, in discourse, the lovers whiled away
The night that waned and waned and brought no day.
They fell: for Heaven to them no hope imparts
Who hear not for the beating of their hearts.
Romance

Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild wood I did lie,
A child—with a most knowing eye.
Of late, eternal Condor years
So shake the very Heaven on high
With tumult as they thunder by,
I have no time for idle cares
Though gazing on the unquiet sky.
And when an hour with calmer wings
Its down upon my spirit flings—
That little time with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden things!
My heart would feel to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the strings.
I
Should my early life seem,
As well it might, a dream—
Yet I build no faith upon
The king Napoleon—
I look not up afar
For my destiny in a star:

II
In parting from you now
Thus much I will avow—
There are beings, and have been
Whom my spirit had not seen
Had I let them pass me by
With a dreaming eye—
If my peace hath fled away
In a night—or in a day—
In a vision—or in none—
Is it therefore the less gone?—
I am standing ‘mid the roar
Of a weather-beaten shore,
And I hold within my hand
Some particles of sand—
How few! and how they creep
Thro’ my fingers to the deep!
My early hopes? no — they
Went gloriously away,
Like lightning from the sky
At once—and so will I.

IV

So young? ah! no—not now—
Thou hast not seen my brow,
But they tell thee I am proud—
They lie—they lie aloud—
My bosom beats with shame
At the paltriness of name
With which they dare combine
A feeling such as mine—
Nor Stoic? I am not:
In the terror of my lot
I laugh to think how poor
That pleasure “to endure!”
What! shade of Zeno!—I!
Endure!—no—no—defy.
To——— (The Bowers Whereat, in Dreams, I See...)

The bowers whereat, in dreams, I see
   The wantonest singing birds,
Are lips—and all thy melody
   Of lip-begotten words—

Thine eyes, in Heaven of heart enshrined
   Then desolately fall,
O God! on my funereal mind
   Like starlight on a pall—

Thy heart—thy heart!—I wake and sigh,
   And sleep to dream till day
Of the truth that gold can never buy—
   Of the baubles that it may.
To the River———

Fair river! in thy bright, clear flow
   Of crystal, wandering water,
Thou art an emblem of the glow
   Of beauty—the unhidden heart—
   The playful maziness of art
   In old Alberto’s daughter;
But when within thy wave she looks—
   Which glistens then, and trembles—
Why, then, the prettiest of brooks
   Her worshipper resembles;
For in his heart, as in thy stream,
   Her image deeply lies—
His heart which trembles at the beam
   Of her soul-searching eyes.
Fairy Land

Dim vales—and shadowy floods—
And cloudy-looking woods,
Whose forms we can’t discover
For the tears that drip all over
Huge moons there wax and wane—
Again—again—again—
Every moment of the night—
Forever changing places—
And they put out the star-light
With the breath from their pale faces.
About twelve by the moon-dial
One more filmy than the rest
(A kind which, upon trial,
They have found to be the best)
Comes down—still down—and down
With its centre on the crown
Of a mountain’s eminence,
While its wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Over hamlets, over halls,
Wherever they may be—
O’er the strange woods—o’er the sea—
Over spirits on the wing—
Over every drowsy thing—
And buries them up quite
In a labyrinth of light—
And then, how deep!—O, deep!
Is the passion of their sleep.

In the morning they arise,
And their moony covering
Is soaring in the skies,
With the tempests as they toss,
Like—almost any thing—
Or a yellow Albatross.

They use that moon no more
For the same end as before—
Videlicet a tent—
Which I think extravagant:
Its atomies, however,
Into a shower dissever,
Of which those butterflies,
Of Earth, who seek the skies,
And so come down again
(Never-contented things!)
Have brought a specimen
Upon their quivering wings.
Alone

From childhood’s hour I have not been
As others were; I have not seen
As others saw; I could not bring
My passions from a common spring.
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow; I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone;
And all I loved, I loved alone.
Then—in my childhood, in the dawn
Of a most stormy life—was drawn
From every depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still:
From the torrent, or the fountain,
From the red cliff of the mountain,
From the sun that round me rolled
In its autumn tint of gold,
From the lightning in the sky
As it passed me flying by,
From the thunder and the storm,
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view.
To Isaac Lea

It was my choice or chance or curse
To adopt the cause for better or worse
And with my worldly goods and wit
And soul and body worship it——
Elizabeth, it surely is most fit
[Logic and common usage so commanding]
In thy own book that first thy name be writ,
Zeno and other sages notwithstanding;
And I have other reasons for so doing
Besides my innate love of contradiction;
Each poet—if a poet—in pursuing
The muses thro’ their bowers of Truth or Fiction,
Has studied very little of his part,
Read nothing, written less—in short’s a fool
Endued with neither soul, nor sense, nor art,
Being ignorant of one important rule,
Employed in even the theses of the school-
Called—I forget the heathenish Greek name
[Called anything, its meaning is the same]
“Always write first things uppermost in the heart.”
Acrostic

Elizabeth it is in vain you say
“Love not”— thou sayest it in so sweet a way:
In vain those words from thee or L. E. L.
Zantippe’s talents had enforced so well:
Ah! if that language from thy heart arise,
Breathe it less gently forth—and veil thine eyes.
Endymion, recollect, when Luna tried
To cure his love—was cured of all beside—
His folly—pride—and passion—for he died.
Lines on Joe Locke

As for Locke, he is all in my eye,
   May the d—l right soon for his soul call.
He never was known to lie—
   In bed at reveille “roll call.”

John Locke was a notable name;
   Joe locke is a greater; in short,
The former was well known to fame,
   But the latter’s well known “to report.”
Romance, who loves to nod and sing,
With drowsy head and folded wing,
Among the green leaves as they shake
Far down within some shadowy lake,
To me a painted paroquet
Hath been—a most familiar bird—
Taught me my alphabet to say—
To lisp my very earliest word
While in the wild-wood I did lie
A child—with a most knowing eye.

Succeeding years, too wild for song,
Then rolled like tropic storms along,
Where, tho’ the garish lights that fly
Dying along the troubled sky,
Lay bare, thro’ vistas thunder-riven,
The blackness of the general Heaven,
That very blackness yet doth fling
Light on the lightning’s silver wing.

For, being an idle boy lang syne,
Who read Anacreon, and drank wine,
I early found Anacreon rhymes
Were almost passionate sometimes—
And by strange alchemy of brain
His pleasures always turned to pain—
His naïveté to wild desire—
His wit to love—his wine to fire—
And so, being young and dipt in folly
I fell in love with melancholy,
And used to throw my earthly rest
And quiet all away in jest—
I could not love except where Death
Was mingling his with Beauty’s breath—
Or Hymen, Time, and Destiny
Were stalking between her and me.

O, then the eternal Condor years
So shook the very Heavens on high,
With tumult as they thundered by;
I had no time for idle cares,
Thro’ gazing on the unquiet sky!
Or if an hour with calmer wing
Its down did on my spirit fling,
That little hour with lyre and rhyme
To while away—forbidden thing!
My heart half feared to be a crime
Unless it trembled with the string.

But now my soul hath too much room—
Gone are the glory and the gloom—
The black hath mellowed into grey,
And all the fires are fading away.

My draught of passion hath been deep—
I reveled, and I now would sleep—
And after-drunkenness of soul
Succeeds the glories of the bowl—
An idle longing night and day
To dream my very life away.

But dreams—of those who dream as I,
Aspiringly, are damned, and die:
Yet should I swear I mean alone,
By notes so very shrilly blown,
To break upon Time’s monotone,
While yet my vapid joy and grief
Are tintless of the yellow leaf—
Why not an imp the greybeard hath,
Will shake his shadow in my path—
And even the greybeard will o’erlook
Connivingly my dreaming-book.
Sit down beside me, Isabel,

*Here*, dearest, where the moonbeam fell
Just now so fairy-like and well.

*Now* thou art dressed for paradise!
I am star-stricken with thine eyes!

My soul is lolling on thy sighs!

Thy hair is lifted by the moon
Like flowers by the low breath of June!

Sit down, sit down—how came we here?
Or is it all but a dream, my dear?

You know that most enormous flower—
That rose—that what d’ye call it—that hung
Up like a dog-star in this bower—
To-day (the wind blew, and) it swung
So impudently in my face,

So like a thing alive you know,

I tore it from its pride of place
And shook it into pieces—so

Be all ingratitude requited.

The winds ran off with it delighted,

And, thro’ the opening left, as soon
As she threw off her cloak, yon moon
Has sent a ray down with a tune.

And this ray is a *fairy* ray—
Did you not say so, Isabel?
How fantastically it fell
With a spiral twist and a swell,
And over the wet grass rippled away
With a tinkling like a bell!
In my own country all the way
We can discover a moon ray
Which thro’ some tattered curtain pries
Into the darkness of a room,
Is by (the very source of gloom)
The motes, and dust, and flies,
On which it trembles and lies
Like joy upon sorrow!
O, *when* will come the morrow?
Isabel! do you not fear
The night and the wonders here?
Dim vales! and shadowy floods!
And cloudy-looking woods
Whose forms we can’t discover
For the tears that drip all over!

Huge moons—see! wax and wane
Again—again—again—
Every moment of the night—
Forever changing places!
How they put out the starlight
With the breath from their pale faces!

Lo! one is coming down
With its centre on the crown
Of a mountain’s eminence!
Down—still down—and down—
Now deep shall be—O deep!
The passion of our sleep!
For that wide circumference
In easy drapery falls
Drowsily over halls—
Over ruined walls—
Over waterfalls,
(Silent waterfalls!)
O’er the strange woods—o’er the sea—
Alas! over the sea!
To Helen (Helen, Thy Beauty Is to Me...)

Helen, thy beauty is to me
   Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
   The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
   Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
   To the glory that was Greece,
   To the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window niche,
   How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
   Are Holy Land!
Israfel

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God’s creatures. —The Koran

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
“Whose heart-strings are a lute;”
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamored moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven),
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli’s fire
Is owing to that lyre
  By which he sits and sings—
The trembling living wire
  Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
  Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love’s a grown-up God—
  Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
  Which we worship in a star.

Therefore, thou art not wrong,
  Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
  Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
  With thy burning measures suit—
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
  With the fervor of thy lute—
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
  Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
  Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
  A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
  From my lyre within the sky.
The Sleeper

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night!
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice-drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,  
Flit through thy chamber in and out,  
And wave the curtain canopy  
So fitfully—so fearfully—  
Above the closed and fringed lid  
‘Neath which thy slumb’ring soul lies hid,  
That, o’er the floor and down the wall,  
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!  
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?  
Why and what art thou dreaming here?  
Sure thou art come o’er far-off seas,  
A wonder to these garden trees!  
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!  
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,  
And this all-solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep  
Which is enduring, so be deep!  
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!  
This chamber changed for one more holy,  
This bed for one more melancholy,  
I pray to God that she may lie  
Forever with unopened eye,  
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by!  

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,  
As it is lasting, so be deep;  
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o’er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne’er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.
The Valley of Unrest

*Once it smiled a silent dell*
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sun-light lazily lay.

*Now each visitor shall confess*
The sad valley’s restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless—
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Unceasingly, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye—
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave:—from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep:—from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.
Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.

There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.

Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol’s diamond eye—
Not the gaily-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass—
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea—
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide—
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow—
The hours are breathing faint and low—
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence.
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.
A Pæn

I
How shall the burial rite be read?
The solemn song be sung?
The requiem for the loveliest dead,
That ever died so young?

II
Her friends are gazing on her,
And on her gaudy bier,
And weep!—oh! to dishonor
Dead beauty with a tear!

III
They loved her for her wealth—
And they hated her for her pride—
But she grew in feeble health,
And they love her—that she died.

IV
They tell me (while they speak
Of her “costly broider’d pall”)
That my voice is growing weak—
    That I should not sing at all—

V

Or that my tone should be
    Tuned to such solemn song
So mournfully—so mournfully,
    That the dead may feel no wrong.

VI

But she is gone above,
    With young Hope at her side,
And I am drunk with love
    Of the dead, who is my bride.—

VII

Of the dead—dead who lies
    All perfumed there,
With the death upon her eyes.
    And the life upon her hair.

VIII
Thus on the coffin loud and long
   I strike—the murmur sent
Through the grey chambers to my song,
   Shall be the accompaniment.

IX

Thou diedst in thy life’s June—
   But thou didst not die too fair:
Thou didst not die too soon,
   Nor with too calm an air.

X

From more than friends on earth,
   Thy life and love are riven,
To join the untainted mirth
   Of more than thrones in heaven.—

XI

Therefore, to thee this night
   I will no requiem raise,
But waft thee on thy flight,
   With a Pæan of old days.
Thou wast that all to me, love,
    For which my soul did pine—
A green isle in the sea, love,
    A fountain and a shrine,
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
    And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
    Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise
But to be overcast!
    A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o’er the Past
    (Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
    The light of Life is o’er!
“No more—no more—no more”—
    (Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
    Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
   And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
   By what eternal streams.
Hymn

At morn—at noon—at twilight dim—
Maria! thou hast heard my hymn!
In joy and wo—in good and ill—
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee
Now, when storms of Fate o’ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine!
“Seldom we find,” says Solomon Don Dunce,
“Half an idea in the profoundest sonnet.
Through all the flimsy things we see at once
As easily as through a Naples bonnet—
Trash of all trash!—how can a lady don it?
Yet heavier far than your Petrarchan stuff—
Owl-downy nonsense that the faintest puff
Twirls into trunk-paper the while you con it.”
And, veritably, Sol is right enough.
The general tuckermanies are arrant
Bubbles—ephemeral and so transparent—
But this is, now—you may depend upon it—
Stable, opaque, immortal—all by dint
Of the dear names that lie concealed within ‘t.
Serenade

So sweet the hour—so calm the time,
I feel it more than half a crime,
When Nature sleeps and stars are mute,
To mar the silence ev’n with lute.
At rest on ocean’s brilliant dyes
An image of Elysium lies:
Seven Pleiades entranced in Heaven,
Form in the deep another seven:
Endymion nodding from above
Sees in the sea a second love.
Within the valleys dim and brown,
And on the spectral mountain’s crown,
The wearied light is dying down,
And earth, and stars, and sea, and sky
Are redolent of sleep, as I
Am redolent of thee and thine
Enthralling love, my Adeline.
But list, O list,—so soft and low
Thy lover’s voice tonight shall flow,
That, scarce awake, thy soul shall deem
My words the music of a dream.
Thus, while no single sound too rude
Upon thy slumber shall intrude,
Our thoughts, our souls—O God above!
In every deed shall mingle, love.
To——— (Sleep On, Sleep On, Another Hour...)

Sleep on, sleep on, another hour—
    I would not break so calm a sleep,
To wake to sunshine and to shower,
    To smile and weep.

Sleep on, sleep on, like sculptured thing,
    Majestic, beautiful art thou;
Sure seraph shields thee with his wing
    And fans thy brow—

We would not deem thee child of earth,
    For, O, angelic, is thy form!
But, that in heaven thou had’st thy birth,
    Where comes no storm

To mar the bright, the perfect flower,
    But all is beautiful and still—
And golden sands proclaim the hour
    Which brings no ill.

Sleep on, sleep on, some fairy dream
    Perchance is woven in thy sleep—
But, O, thy spirit, calm, serene,
    Must wake to weep.
Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie,)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory!

Vastness! and Age! and Memories of Eld!
Silence! and Desolation! and dim Night!
I feel ye now—I feel ye in your strength—
O spells more sure than e’er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls!
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat!
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle!
Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolly,
Glides, spectre-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the hornéd moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones!

But stay! these walls—these ivy-clad arcades—
These mouldering plinths—these sad and blackened shafts—
These vague entablatures—this crumbling frieze—
These shattered cornices—this wreck—this ruin—
These stones—alas! these grey stones—are they all—
All of the famed, and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

“Not all”—the Echoes answer me—“not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent—we pallid stones.
Not all our power is gone—not all our fame—
Not all the magic of our high renown—
Not all the wonder that encircles us—
Not all the mysteries that in us lie—
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory.”
The dying swan by northern lakes
Sings its wild death song, sweet and clear,
And as the solemn music breaks
O’er hill and glen dissolves in air;
Thus musical thy soft voice came,
Thus trembled on thy tongue my name.

Like sunburst through the ebon cloud,
Which veils the solemn midnight sky,
Piercing cold evening’s sable shroud,
Thus came the first glance of that eye;
But like the adamantine rock,
My spirit met and braved the shock.

Let memory the boy recall
Who laid his heart upon thy shrine,
When far away his footsteps fall,
Think that he deemed thy charms divine;
A victim on love’s altar slain,
By witching eyes which looked disdain.
To Frances S. Osgood

Thou wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
   From its present pathway part not!
Being everything which now thou art,
   Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
   Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise.
   And love—a simple duty.
To F———

Beloved! amid the earnest woes
  That crowd around my earthly path—
(Drear path, alas! where grows
Not even one lonely rose)—
  My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of bland repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
  Like some enchanted far-off isle
In some tumultuous sea—
Some ocean throbbing far and free
  With storm—but where meanwhile
Serenest skies continually
Just o’er that one bright inland smile.
To Mary

Mary, amid the cares—the woes
    Crowding around my earthly path,
(Sad path, alas! where grows
Not ev’n one lonely rose,)
    My soul at least a solace hath
In dreams of thee, and therein knows
An Eden of sweet repose.

And thus thy memory is to me
    Like some enchanted far-off isle,
In some tumultuous sea—
Some lake beset as lake can be
    With storms—but where, meanwhile,
Serenest skies continually
    Just o’er that one bright island smile.
May Queen Ode

Fairies guard the Queen of May,
Let her reign in Peace and Honor—
Every blessing be upon her;
May her future pathway lie,
All beneath a smiling sky.
The ring is on my hand,
    And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command.
    And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
    But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell—
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
    And who is happy now.

But he spoke to reassure me,
    And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a reverie came o’er me,
And to the churchyard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D’Elormie,
    “Oh, I am happy now!”

And thus the words were spoken,
    And thus the plighted vow,
And, though my faith be broken,
And, though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden keys
    That proves me happy now!

Would to God I could awaken
    For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,—
Lest the dead who is forsaken
    May not be happy now.
Fair isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
   Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take,
How many memories of what radiant hours
   At sight of thee and thine at once awake!
How many scenes of what departed bliss!
   How many thoughts of what entombéd hopes!
How many visions of a maiden that is
   No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes!
No more! alas, that magical sad sound
   Transforming all! Thy charms shall please no more,—
Thy memory no more! Accurséd ground
   Henceforward I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,
O hyacinthine isle! O purple Zante!
   “Isola d’oro! Fior di Levante!”
The Haunted Palace

In the greenest of our valleys
   By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
   Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought’s dominion—
   It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
   Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
   On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
   Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
   In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
   A wingéd odor went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,
   Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
   To a lute’s well-tunéd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
   Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
   The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
   Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
   And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
   Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
   The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
   Assailed the monarch’s high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for never morrow
   Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
   That blushed and bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered story
   Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
   Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
   To a discordant melody,
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
   Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever
And laugh—but smile no more.
Sonnet: Silence

There are some qualities—some incorporate things,
  That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
  From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a twofold Silence—sea and shore—
  Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
  Newly with grass o’ergrown; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless: his name’s “No More.”
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!
  No power hath he of evil in himself;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)
  Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!
The Conqueror Worm

Lo! ’tis a gala night
   Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
   In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
   A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
   The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
   Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly—
   Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
   That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
   Invisible Wo!

That motley drama—oh, be sure
   It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore,
   By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
   To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
   And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
   A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
   The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
   The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
   In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
   And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
   Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
   Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, “Man,”
   And its hero the Conqueror Worm.
Ah, broken is the golden bowl!—the spirit flown forever!
Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;
And, Guy de Vere, hast thou no tear?—weep now or never more!
See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!
Come! let the burial rite be read—the funeral song be sung!—
An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young—
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her pride,
And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—that she died:—
How shall the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how be sung
By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the slanderous tongue
That did to death the innocence that died, and died so young?”

*Peccavimus*; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong!
The sweet Lenore “hath gone before,” with Hope that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been thy bride—
For her, the fair and *débonnaire*, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair, but not within her eyes—
The life still there upon her hair—the death upon her eyes.

“Avaunt!—avaunt! to friends from fiends the indigent ghost is riven—
From Hell unto a high estate within the utmost Heaven—
From moan and groan to a golden throne beside the King of Heaven:—
Let no bell toll, then, lest her soul, amid its hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note as it doth float up from the damnéd Earth!
And I—tonight my heart is light:—no dirge will I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a Pæan of old days!”
Dream-Land

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule—
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
    Out of SPACE—out of TIME.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms, and caves, and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters—lone and dead,—
Their still waters—still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead,—
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily,—
By the mountains—near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever,—
By the grey woods,—by the swamp
Where the toad and the newt encamp,—
By the dismal tarns and pools
    Where dwell the Ghouls,—
By each spot the most unholy—
In each nook most melancholy,—
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past—
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by—
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth—and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
‘Tis a peaceful, soothing region—
For the spirit that walks in shadow
O! it is an Eldorado!
But the traveller, traveling through it,
May not—dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only.
Where an Eidolon, named NIGHT,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.
Impromptu: To Kate Carol

When from your gems of thought I turn
To those pure orbs, your heart to learn,
I scarce know which to prize most high—
The bright i-dea, or the bright dear-eye.
Eulalie

I dwelt alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.

Ah, less—less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapor can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,
Can vie with the modest Eulalie’s most unregarded curl—
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie’s most humble and careless curl.

Now Doubt—now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astarté within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.
Epigram for Wall Street

I’ll tell you a plan for gaining wealth,
   Better than banking, trade or leases—
Take a bank note and fold it up,
   And then you will find your money in creases!
This wonderful plan, without danger or loss,
   Keeps your cash in your hands, where nothing can trouble it;
And every time that you fold it across,
   ’Tis as plain as the light of the day that you double it!
The Raven

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door.
“‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the Morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
“‘Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping—tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—
   Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Lenore!”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Lenore!”
   Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon I heard again a tapping, somewhat louder than before.
   “Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
   Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
   ‘Tis the wind and nothing more!”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
   Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
   “Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said, “art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian shore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
   With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered, “Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.”
   Then the bird said, “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope the melancholy burden bore—
   Of ‘Never—nevermore.’”

But the Raven still beguiling my sad face into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o’er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o’er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthé from thy memories of Lenore;
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthé and forget this lost Lenore!”
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!”
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.”
Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked, upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!
I would not lord it o’er thy heart,
   Alas! I cannot rule my own,
Nor would I rob one loyal thought,
   From him who there should reign alone;
We both have found a life-long love;
   Wherein our weary souls may rest,
Yet may we not, my gentle friend
   Be each to each the *second best*?

A love which shall be passion-free,
   Fondness as pure as it is sweet,
A bond where all the dearest ties
   Of brother, friend and *cousin* meet,—
Such is the union I would frame,
   That thus we might be doubly blest,
With Love to rule our hearts supreme
   And friendship to be *second best*.
The Divine Right of Kings

The only king by right divine
Is Ellen King, and were she mine
I’d strive for liberty no more,
But hug the glorious chains I wore.

Her bosom is an ivory throne,
Where tyrant virtue reigns alone;
No subject vice dare interfere,
To check the power that governs here.

O! would she deign to rule my fate,
I’d worship Kings and kingly state,
And hold this maxim all life long,
The King—my King—can do no wrong.
Lady! I would that verse of mine
   Could fling, all lavishly and free,
Prophetic tones from every line,
   Of health, joy, peace, in store for thee.

Thine should be length of happy days,
   Enduring joys and fleeting cares,
Virtues that challenge envy’s praise,
   By rivals loved, and mourned by heirs.

Thy life’s free course should ever roam
   Beyond this bounded earthly clime,
No billow breaking into foam
   Upon the rock-girt shore of Time.

The gladness of a gentle heart,
   Pure as the wishes breathed in prayer,
Which has in others’ joys a part,
   While in its own all others share.

The fullness of a cultured mind,
   Stored with the wealth of bard and sage,
Which Error’s glitter cannot blind,
   Lustrous in youth, undimmed in age;
The grandeur of a guileless soul,
   With wisdom, virtue, feeling fraught,
Gliding serenely to its goal,
   Beneath the eternal sky of Thought:—

These should be thine, to guard and shield,
   And this the life thy spirit live,
Blest with all bliss that earth can yield,
   Bright with all hopes that Heaven can give.
A Valentine

For her these lines are penned, whose luminous eyes,

  Brightly expressive as the twins of Lœda,
Shall find her own sweet name that, nestling lies

  Upon the page, enwrapped from every reader.
Search narrowly this rhyme, which holds a treasure

  Divine—a talisman—an amulet
That must be worn at heart. Search well the measure—

  The words—the letters themselves! Do not forget
The triuest point, or you may lose your labor.

  And yet there is in this no Gordian knot
Which one might not undo without a sabre,

  If one could merely understand the plot.
Enwritten upon this page whereon are peering

  Such eager eyes, there lies, I say, perdu,
A well-known name, oft uttered in the hearing

  Of poets, by poets—as the name is a poet’s, too.
Its letters, although naturally lying—

  Like the knight Pinto—Mendez Ferdinando—
Still form a synonym for Truth. Cease trying!

  You will not read the riddle though you do the best you can do.
Deep in Earth

Deep in earth my love is lying
   And I must weep alone.
To Miss Louise Olivia Hunter

Though I turn, I fly not—
   I cannot depart;
I would try, but try not
   To release my heart.
And my hopes are dying
   While, on dreams relying,
I am spelled by art.

Thus, the bright snake coiling
   ’Neath the forest tree
Wins the bird, beguiling,
   To come down and see:
Like that bird the lover
Round his fate will hover
Till the blow is over
   And he sinks—like me.
Of all who hail thy presence as the morning—
Of all to whom thine absence is the night—
The blotting utterly from out high heaven
The sacred sun—of all who, weeping, bless thee
Hourly for hope—for life—ah! above all,
For the resurrection of deep-buried faith
In Truth, in Virtue, in Humanity—
Of all who, on Despair’s unhallowed bed
Lying down to die, have suddenly arisen
At thy soft-murmured words, “Let there be light!”
At thy soft-murmured words that were fulfilled
In thy seraphic glancing of thine eyes—
Of all who owe thee most—whose gratitude
Nearest resembles worship—oh, remember
The truest—the most fervently devoted,
And think that these weak lines are written by him—
By him who, as he pens them, thrills to think
His spirit is communing with an angel’s.
Not long ago, the writer of these lines,
In the mad pride of intellectuality,
Maintained “the power of words”—denied that ever
A thought arose within the human brain
Beyond the utterance of the human tongue;
And now, as if in mockery of that boast,
Two words—two foreign soft dissyllables—
Italian tones made only to be murmured
By angels dreaming in the moonlit “dew
That hangs like chains of pearl on Hermon hill”—
Have stirred from out the abysses of his heart,
Unthought-like thoughts that are the souls of thought,
Richer, far wilder, far diviner visions
Than even the seraph harper, Israfel,
Who has “the sweetest voice of all God’s creatures,”
Could hope to utter. And I! my spells are broken.
The pen falls powerless from my shivering hand.
With thy dear name as text, though bidden by thee,
I cannot write—I cannot speak or think—
Alas, I cannot feel; for ’tis not feeling,
This standing motionless upon the golden
Threshold of the wide-open gate of dreams,
Gazing, entranced, adown the gorgeous vista,
And thrilling as I see upon the right,
Upon the left, and all the way along
Amid empurpled vapors, far away
To where the prospect terminates—thee only.
Ulalume

The skies they were ashen and sober;
   The leaves they were crispéd and sere—
   The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
   Of my most immemorial year:
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
   In the misty mid region of Weir—
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
   In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic.
   Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
   Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
   As the scoriac rivers that roll—
   As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
   In the ultimate climes of the Pole—
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
   In the realms of the Boreal Pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
   But our thoughts they were palsied and sere—
   Our memories were treacherous and sere—
For we knew not the month was October,
   And we marked not the night of the year—
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber—
   (Though once we had journeyed down here)—
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,
   Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now as the night was senescent
   And star-dials pointed to morn—
   As the sun-dials hinted of morn—
At the end of our path a liquefescent
   And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
   Arose with a duplicate horn—
Astarte’s bediamonded crescent
   Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said: “She is warmer than Dian;
   She rolls through an ether of sighs—
   She revels in a region of sighs.
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
   These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
   To point us the path to the skies—
   To the Lethean peace of the skies—
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
   To shine on us with her bright eyes—
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
   With love in her luminous eyes.”

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
   Said: “Sadly this star I mistrust—
   Her pallor I strangely mistrust:—
Oh, hasten!—ah, let us not linger!
   Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must.”

In terror she spoke, letting sink her
   Wings till they trailed in the dust—
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
   Plumes till they trailed in the dust—
   Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied: “This is nothing but dreaming:
   Let us on by this tremulous light!
   Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming
   With Hope and in Beauty to-night:—
   See!—it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
   And be sure it will lead us aright—
We safely may trust to a gleaming
   That cannot but guide us aright,
   Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night.”

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
   And tempted her out of her gloom—
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of a vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb—
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said: “What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?”
She replied: “Ulalume—Ulalume—
‘Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!”

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispéd and sere—
As the leaves that were withering and sere;
And I cried: “It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here!—
That I brought a dread burden down here—
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber—
This misty mid region of Weir—
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,—
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.”

Said we, then—the two, then: “Ah, can it
Have been that the woodlandish ghouls—
The pitiful, the merciful ghouls—
To bar up our way and to ban it
From the secret that lies in these wolds—
From the thing that lies hidden in these wolds—
Have drawn up the spectre of a planet
From the limbo of lunary souls—
This sinfully scintillant planet
From the Hell of the planetary souls?”
To Helen (I Saw Thee Once...)

I saw thee once—once only—years ago:
I must not say how many—but not many.
It was a July midnight; and from out
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,
With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,
Upon the upturn’d faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—
Fell on the upturn’d faces of these roses
That gave out, in return for the love-light,
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—
Fell on the upturn’d faces of these roses
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank
I saw thee half reclining; while the moon
Fell on the upturn’d faces of the roses,
And on thine own, upturn’d—alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
Was it not Fate (whose name is also Sorrow),
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,
Save only thee and me—(Oh, Heaven!—oh, God!
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!—
Save only thee and me). I paused—I looked—
And in an instant all things disappeared.
(Oh, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)
The pearly lustre of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses’ odors
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.
All—all expired save thee—save less than thou:
Save only the divine light in thine eyes—
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.
I saw but them—they were the world to me.
I saw but them—saw only them for hours—
Saw only them until the moon went down.
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie unwritten
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!
How dark a woe! yet how sublime a hope!
How silently serene a sea of pride!
How daring an ambition! yet how deep—
How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees
Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained.*
They *would not* go—they never yet have gone.
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,
*They* have not left me (as my hopes have) since.
They follow me—they lead me through the years.
They are my ministers—yet I their slave.
Their office is to illumine and enkindle—
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,
And purified in their electric fire,
And sanctified in their elysian fire.
They fill my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),
And are far up in Heaven—the stars I kneel to
In the sad, silent watches of my night;
While even in the meridian glare of day
I see them still—two sweetly scintillant
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!
Fill with mingled cream and amber
   I will drain that glass again.
Such hilarious visions clamber
   Through the chamber of my brain—
Quaintest thoughts—queerest fancies
   Come to life and fade away;
What care I how time advances?
   I am drinking ale today!
The Bells

I

Hear the sledges with the bells—
   Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
   How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
   In their icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
   With a crystalline delight;
   Keeping time, time, time,
   In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
   From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
   Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,—
   Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
   Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!—
From the molten golden-notes,
   And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
   On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
   How it swells!
   How it dwells
   On the Future!—how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
   Of the bells, bells, bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
   Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells—
   Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror now their turbulency tells!
   In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
   Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
   Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
    Leaping higher, higher, higher,
    With a desperate desire,
    And a resolute endeavor
    Now—now to sit, or never,

By the side of the pale-faced moon.
    Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
    What a tale their terror tells
        Of Despair!
    How they clang, and clash, and roar!
    What a horror they outpour

On the bosom of the palpitating air!
    Yet the ear, it fully knows,
        By the twanging,
        And the clanging,
        How the danger ebbs and flows;
    Yet the ear distinctly tells,
        In the jangling,
        And the wrangling,
        How the danger sinks and swells,

By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells—
    Of the bells—
    Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
        Bells, bells, bells—

In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!
Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who toiling, toiling, toiling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls:—
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
    To the pæan of the bells—
        Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
    To the throbbing of the bells—
        Of the bells, bells, bells—
            To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
    As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
    To the rolling of the bells—
        Of the bells, bells, bells:—
            To the tolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
    Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.
A Dream within a Dream

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow—
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream:
Yet if Hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision or in none,
Is it therefore the less gone?

All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?
For Annie

Thank Heaven! the crisis—
   The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
   Is over at last—
And the fever called “Living”
   Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know,
   I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
   As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
   I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly,
   Now in my bed,
That any beholder
   Might fancy me dead—
 Might start at beholding me
   Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
   The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called “Living”
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:—
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:—

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
   And narrow my bed—
For man never slept
   In a different bed;
And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
   In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
   Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
   Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
   Of myrtles and roses:

For now, while so quietly
   Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
   About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odor,
   Commingled with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
   Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
   Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
   And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
    She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
    To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
    From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
    She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
    To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
    To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly,
    Now in my bed
(Knowing her love),
    That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
    Now in my bed,
(With her love at my breast),
    That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
    Thinking me dead:—

But my heart it is brighter
    Than all of the many
Stars of the heaven,
   For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the fire
   Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
   Of the eyes of my Annie.
Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
    Had journeyed long,
    Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o’er his heart a shadow
    Fell as he found
    No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
    “Shadow,” said he,
    “Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?”

    “Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
   The shade replied,—
“If you seek for Eldorado!”
Sonnet: To My Mother

Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
    The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
    None so devotional as that of “Mother,”
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
    You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where Death installed you,
    In setting my Virginia’s spirit free.
My mother—my own mother, who died early,
    Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
    And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
    Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.
It was many and many a year ago,
   In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
   By the name of Annabel Lee;—
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
   Than to love and be loved by me.

She was a child and I was a child,
   In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
   I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the wingéd seraphs of Heaven
   Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
   In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud by night
   Chilling my Annabel Lee;
So that her hightborn kinsmen came
   And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
   In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me:—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
   In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud, chilling
   And killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
   Of those who were older than we—
   Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above,
   Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:—

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
   Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
   In her sepulchre there by the sea—
   In her tomb by the side of the sea.
About the Editor


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