

## The Project Gutenberg eBook of Gossip, by Mona Gould

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Foreward The two Monas, whose joint name has confused Gossip readers these long years, have finally come out on the Canadian scene as the two distinct people they are - Mona Gould, the poet, whose verse has charmed and intrigued, and Mona Clark, the editor, who brought this verse to Gossip's pages.

The two Monas hope that this collection has all the poems you have liked best.

Sincerely,  
Mona Clark  
Mona Gould

Apple Orchard

White as popcorn, was the tree  
And underneath it on the lea  
A little goat looked up at me.

Bright and wicked was his glance  
In that orchard's sweet expanse  
In a mocking sort of dance  
Moved his hooves.

He was Pan, and he was Spring  
With a sudden saucy spring  
Off he flew . . .  
Just a shadow in the air . . .  
Was he really ever there?

For all Ear-Pinners

There are some people  
Who delight  
In pinning people's ears  
Back tight.  
I'd love to be on hand  
That day  
When things work out  
The other way!

To Snow ... or Not to Snow!

Feather down soft deep snow  
Feather down . . . I implore you.  
The part of me that's Poet  
Simply adores you!  
The part of me that's "working girl"  
Equally abhors you!  
Snow is like thistledown  
Filigree-ing trees:  
But waiting for street cars . . .  
It's wet ankles and  
Knees!

Counsel

Heart, be very cautious now  
Remember . . . once before  
Love was like a bright room . . .  
Then a slammed door!

In a Fit of Pique

If you have not learned to give proudly  
Do not prate to me of "love"!  
There are those, who as children  
Clutch tight the bottom, of the candy-bag  
Saying "Help yourself"  
But making very sure  
The gift is limited.  
These children grow up to be  
Stingy lovers.  
I have no patience with them!

It Doesn't Matter

It doesn't matter much to me  
About a person's family tree  
Or what his special vices are  
Or if he drives a custom car  
Or if his Clubs are old and formal  
As long as he is nice and normal!

Sherry

Sherry . . . twinkling in a little glass  
Warm as snared sunlight  
A pool of golden light  
To make a flight of dreams.  
(I can see your eyes  
Twinkling back at the Sherry.  
Merry as all "get out"!)  
Even when I am a very ancient lady  
And the decanter goes round

I shall remember you with a sweet shock . . .  
I'll be bound!

#### Last of the Line

Ah, primitive and hardy  
Our fathers were . . . of old . . .  
But even on my brightest days  
I can't quite shower . . . cold!

#### Teen Age

They talk of sooper dooper things  
And wear each other's pins and rings.  
They swim and dance and ski and smoke  
And get a bang from lemon coke.

Play records . . . speak of Dizz and Duke  
And dance wherever there's a Juke.  
Chameleon-like, they change and vary  
And suddenly grow up . . . and marry!

#### Top Toad

He always said:  
"I'd rather be dead  
Than be a small toad in a big puddle.  
I like the huddle and power I have in a small town" . . .  
Then, (with a black frown)  
"I prefer to be a big toad in a little puddle!"  
The only thing that struck you  
As you watched his steam-roller tactics down his narrow road  
He'd somehow . . . begun to resemble his own model . . .  
The big toad!

#### War Weary

Some ladies love to sleep alone  
In solitary state  
Chaste . . . unruffled and serene:  
This . . . I . . . hate!

#### Ice-Steria

Whenever it is "three below"  
I wish myself in Mexico  
Or dancing with a Hottentot  
Or anywhere where I am not!

#### Aftermath

After holiday food  
I feel so hell-ry  
I long to subsist On tea and cel'ry!

#### Moot Question

Why is it  
When the wind blows  
I get a red nose  
Some gals get all dewy-eyed  
And fresh . . . and sort of  
"jeune fille"  
You should see me!

#### Lunch Hour

The conversation murmurs in a steady "thrum"  
With little quick arpeggios  
Of treble laughter.  
The tables are arranged  
In precisely  
The same order.  
Nothing is changed  
Save the day . . . and the year . . .  
And the certain knowledge  
You'll not be here!  
Fair Warning  
It may be wisdom, dearest man,  
To subjugate me while you can.  
Because some day I do intend  
To seek the roadway's farthest end.

#### Witch

"I'll put a little 'hex' on you  
To make your drinks a bitter brew  
If you forget me!"  
This, I vowed  
And all you did  
Was laugh aloud.

"Perched on an ice cube  
In your glass  
I'll scowl and say;  
"A pretty pass!  
To snatch a lady's heart ... and run . . .  
Egad! me lad! It isn't done!"  
Silly of me, my Sweet, to taunt you  
With childish threats of how I'd haunt you!  
But still . . . I tell you, if I could  
O darling heart . . . of course I would!

#### Ballet Moment

Color, that is like the diffusion

Of the bronze gong  
And little tinkling cymbals.  
Highlight on hands and cheekbones  
Flying Oriental brow  
Smooth hair!

Points . . . piquant as almond buds  
Costumes like Chinese lanterns  
Swaying . . .  
Belling in . . . and out.  
Pity sleep in the curve of her palms  
Anger in the thrust of her shoulders.  
This is a mask  
Come to life  
And dancing!

### Brave Voyage

Come, my Sweet  
Let us walk in the sleet  
(If you can keep your feet!)

Creep like a couple of snails  
Clinging to rails  
When all else fails.  
Poets have sung of walking in rain,  
Or even snow . . .  
Fain would I go in the sleet . . .  
(If you can keep your feet!)

### Ultimatum

Another blizzard and  
Well . . . I Warn Yuh  
I'm off like a streak To California!

### Black Coffee

Smiling sweetly, respected trulls  
Drinking coffee from polished skulls.  
A touch of arsenic, "One lump, or two?"  
And the cups go round with their deadly brew.  
The Atomic Bomb is an awesome thing  
But so is woman . . .  
Gossiping!

### Sufficient Reason

I prostitute my Art  
Because it's tactical;  
For starving in a garret  
Isn't practical!

### His Mistress is Heard Singing

"I long to turn to you and say:  
Hullo my Darling. . .  
How was your day"  
What did you do  
And who did you meet  
And what was the 'to-do'  
Down the street?"  
These are the little  
The darling things  
That go together  
With wedding rings!

#### Wide World

O when you lock your doors each night  
You either shut the world outside  
Or else your own four walls enfold  
A planet twice as far and wide!

Tsk! Tsk! Mister Santa!  
If Santa Claus comes down my chimney  
This year  
And puts sooty big foot marks  
All over my white hearth rug  
I'm going to give him What for!

Last year  
He not only knocked half the ornaments off the tree,  
And generally bunged things up,  
But he insisted on putting beer bottle tops  
In the twins' stockings  
Instead of the annual quarter.  
If Santa Claus comes down my chimney  
This year  
And doesn't mind his "p's" and "q's" . . .  
I'll send him off to bed  
And finish the job myself!

#### Sorcery

What is this shock of sweet delight  
That puts all sober thoughts to flight  
On hearing someone speak your name  
This little candle in my heart  
That glows and burns and warms each part  
Of day and night. This friendly thing  
That stirs in me till I must sing.  
Your look and voice, the enchanting way  
You pin a flower on my day!

#### Everywoman Song

O some men are married to gorgons  
Who swallow them at one swallow,  
And some are married to frigidaires  
And dwell in an icy hollow.

And some there arc, that are bound in chains  
As golden as they can be  
But you're the luckiest one of all  
For Darling . . . you've just got me!

#### Sung in High Dudgeon!

I'd like to be the deadly type  
Who plunge the knife . . . before they wipe  
The previous victim's flowing gore  
From off the blade. Sad to relate I seem to be  
The victim! ... A chicken-hearted sort of thing  
I've no desire for "skewering"  
My fellow man.  
But by observing I may learn  
To give that rapier lightning turn!

#### Wise Child

To sing to you would be absurd.  
You'd not believe a single word!  
To touch you would be madder still,  
And so I sit and fill . . . and fill  
My eyes with looking. Like a child  
Who sees an iced cake,  
But knows from sad experience  
The tummy ache!

#### Women are Like That

"Here, in the drift of the dunes" he said,  
"Turn your head!"  
"Now the curve of your throat is a troubling song  
Your face is a flower, dreaming and white,  
My heart cries out in the rapturous night.  
Give me your lips and your heart", said he,  
But she shook her head . . . emphatically!  
"Gee, but you're sweet!", the other said,  
And tilted back her little head  
Appreciatively.  
He didn't call her "fairest one",  
She didn't mind ... or think it queer ...  
But looked on him, adoringly,  
And whispered . . .  
"O my Dearest Dear!"

#### Tea-Party

They get their heads together,  
The honeyed malice drips.  
And all the gentler little wives  
Get out their blacksnake whips.

It's such a pleasant pastime  
The hours simply fly.

Before they know it's time to go  
But who will make the try  
O who will have the fortitude  
To rise and first depart  
Knowing full well the hungry horde  
Is dining on her heart!

#### Hobson's Choice

Life is a rose  
And life is a thistle -  
And life is the screech of a steamboat's whistle  
But nevertheless - if you asked the Dead  
They'd probably choose to be in your bed!

#### Letter from Paris

You write of Paris like a man  
Telling of the woman he loves.  
There is love in the lines that draw the city under rain;  
The higgeldy-piggeldy garrets  
That climb crazily against the tender pink of the sky;  
Montmartre, with the cafés, just as you'd read they'd be!  
Everything just as glamorous . . . just as exciting  
A gay ... a mocking . . . a shining, shimmering place  
A feminine city!  
Your regret at leaving Paris  
Is like parting from a woman.  
Paris has wounded you  
With her loveliness!

#### Conjecture

Why should I think of you  
As a Perewinkle?  
Retired . . .  
Out of sight in your shell . . .  
Safe!  
I wonder what would happen  
If once again in your lifetime  
Someone, armed with a sharp pin,  
Pricked you into the daylight?

#### Time Was

When you were here, life did not run  
In prim and ordered placid rows  
The sky was full of spinning stars  
And laughter danced upon its toes!

"Track"!

This is release;



This, the sloughing off of the outer husk;  
The spruces lean  
To clutch you in a green embrace;  
But your spirit has already outstripped them  
Flying in arrowy rhythm  
Round a sudden turn In the ski trail!

#### Travellers

We traveled down a grassy road  
O sweet it was to wander!  
And parted at the forks of it  
And this is what I ponder:  
Would it have been a braver thing  
For us to stay together,  
In spite of any single thing . . .  
Against whatever weather?

#### Ailurophile

When neighbours' cats begin to yowl and yammer  
You always want to hit them with a hammer!  
But when your own puts on this spring display  
You almost always wonder "Should we spay?" ...  
Or "Shall we add another to our flock  
And just have kittens, all around the clock"?  
O isn't it a thing both true and queer  
That one cat's "calling" falling on the ear  
Is troublesome . . . a noisome imposition  
While with your cat it's just his disposition,  
And all his other graces far outnumber  
The yearly Spring nocturnal break of slumber!

#### Word to the Wise

Little lady never pray  
A ring of gold to wear  
Lest you find it in your nose -  
Much to your despair!

#### Results

I have never asked for much  
From this world's anointed:  
Strange to say from day to day  
I've not been disappointed!

#### Why?

The lady 'neath the smallest hat  
Is often very short and fat;  
While "slivers", slick and very tall  
Wear cartwheels, like a parasol!

## Aspiration

I'd like to be a critic  
But one who didn't write  
Then, when I gouged their eyes out  
They couldn't turn and bite!

## Island Parting (Muskoka)

How hard it is to say "good-by" to an Island,  
Rising tall, with its trees out of clear water  
Tawny in the shallows.  
Here, white birches bare their shining bones  
To summer moonlight;  
And one blue heron lifts himself with terrible beauty  
Into the evening.  
I cannot say why Islands do this to me.  
I only know that putting out into the open gap  
Bound for the Mainland  
Is like losing hands with one you love  
Too much!

## Photogenic

It must be nice to be photogenic;  
To not have to get in to a panic  
When you "see the birdie".  
To just sit there . . . smug . . .  
While they snap your mug.  
And to know you'll look like  
Garbo . . . or Hedy Lamarr  
In the finished photo.  
Not . . . Mr. Moto!

## Salad Bar

There's nothing sadder in this world  
Than stale stuffed celery, over-curved!

## In The Swim

O to be a Petty gal  
Now that summer's here,  
With thigh and breast and tawny crest  
And slick and stream-lined "rear"  
To lounge against the gilded sands  
As in a billboard ad  
While some Adonis, thick of neck,  
A great athletic cad  
Leans over one with tender sigh  
And whispers soft and low  
"The Company who made your suit

Designed these trunks, you know"!

### Adversary

She stuck her little hat pin in  
And gave a practiced twist.  
The only thing that saves my pride  
On someone with a tougher hide  
She'll break her little wrist!

### Traitor

You said my face  
Was like a mask  
A little white unstirred expanse  
Where no emotion came to dance.

You said my eyes were secret eyes  
That wore a mocking shy disguise.

You said, "No matter how you try  
Your mouth betrays you, by and by?"

### Sheepskin

An education used to be  
A thing of strict gentility  
With Classics solid as a rock  
And stresses laid on culture talk.  
Now . . . when he graduates - a man  
Must just make money with élan!

### Alien

O I am homesick every day  
For places I shall never stay.  
For tinkling bells in Samarkand  
Where shadows weave a saraband,  
And London streets and Paris nights  
And O a thousand warm delights  
In places strange and far from here  
And . . . (naturellement) doubly dear!

### Cameo

I can't insult my heart again  
By crying over gentlemen.  
But rather trot it out to tea  
With ladies of gentility,  
Whose talk and bread sliced neat and thin  
Will lift me from the straits I'm in!

## Renegade

**Part of me is sad as sad And part of me is glad as glad. Part of me is pure as pure, And part of me . . . I'm not so sure. At odds within myself I be, And blame it on my Family Tree!**

## Mask

You may make your mouth up  
Scarlet as a courtesan's . . .  
Thin sophistication  
Lurks in scarlet paint  
Even masked in satire  
Still your eyes betray you  
Playing tarnished lady  
Funny little saint!

## If This be Good ...

If this be good  
Then it shall last  
Far past the rasp Of Sexton's spade . . .  
Far past the snow of winter laid  
On sleeping garden;  
Some part of this will still endure  
On Time's wide stream;  
Some single sure enchanted moment  
Caught up in space will shine forever.  
And in my heart I'm very sure  
Which little moment will endure!

## Disenchanted

They always say, "Be good, sweet child  
And let who will ... be clever".  
But does this course pay dividends?  
I answer . . . hardly ever!

## Figment

It's snowing feathers to-day.  
Bits of maribou  
From some very frivolous angel's  
Bed-Jacket!

## Unbiased Comment

Small furry creatures part with life  
To deck each plutocratic wife.  
And many a tender throat is wrapt  
In silky softness someone trapped.  
I don't condemn this savage rite  
Nor wince to see the endless sight

Of lovely ladies wrapt in fur . . .  
Egad! I only wish I were!

#### Venomous Woman

She has avaricious fingers  
On which there lingers  
The bitter scent of almonds.  
Poisonous woman!  
How her nails  
Glitter in the candlelight.  
Only her eyes  
Suddenly tear you apart.  
There is a look in them  
Of one who gazed on death  
And found it  
Beautiful!

#### Bookshops

Bookshops have a lovely smell  
Sweet and sour . . . heaven and hell.  
Dust and mould, and something magic,  
Laughter, cheek by jowl with tragic  
Songs the Muses used to sing . . .  
I love bookshops, in the spring!

#### Powder Room

At every little crystal square  
Grave women creatures sit and stare  
At what the day has done to mar  
Frail personal beauty; puff and jar  
And lip rouge tubes are taken out  
To dye each thoughtful waiting pout;  
No hurried smear . . . a careful rite  
Then infinite scansion in the light.  
The final look,  
The little smile  
Triumphant . . . careful . . . full of guile  
Absorbed completely in her task  
Each "Eve" adjusts her powdered mask!

#### Bend Your Head

Bend your head and kiss my hand  
And tell me tales of Samarkand.  
Weave a web of lovely words  
That I may count like singing birds  
That I may set upon my sill  
When you have left me . . . As you will!

#### Promise

I shall not weep when you go  
But don a scarlet dress  
And I shall sing a gay song  
And you shall never guess.

And I shall dance when you go  
With other eager men  
And make my heart forget you . . .  
And you shall want me, then!

### Remnant

You promised me Fidelity.  
I got a ring -  
I got a vow -  
And now . . .  
I got a ring!

### Aware

I hope I never quite get over  
The smell of rainy summer clover;  
Or how a willow tree at night  
Can make a silver sort of light;  
Or how a child with lifted face  
Can make a holy sort of place!

### Out of Loneliness ...

Out of a loneliness more deep  
Than quiet death.  
Out of a sleep  
As cold as ice . . . more drear, more chill  
I hunger up toward dreaming;  
Fill my hands with flowers,  
Tread a measure against bright candles,  
Bare my throat to Autumn moonlight  
Cry to the stars that love rides by  
Against whatever midnight sky!

### Chalk Talk

Sometimes I tell myself  
"Chumley! It's about time you acquired a little dignity.  
Not much.  
Just a touch.  
Take to wearing a hat  
And the like of that.  
Quit enjoying the society of youth in the formative stage  
In other words . . . "Act your age!"  
I've gone into this subject with myself before  
But it's such a bore!  
I know what will come of it.  
One day they'll be saying  
"What a silly old person she is . . ."

Flighty . . .  
Maybe touched in the head" . . .  
And will my face be red!  
But I fancy in the final analysis  
We follow our natural bent.  
So I shan't relent.  
Dignity comes to us all  
Dressed in a shroud.  
Forgive . . . if just for a little . . .  
I laugh aloud!

On the T. T. C.

Assorted people sit or ride  
Forced intimates: and "hide to hide"  
As close as in a double bed  
They touch at thigh and arm and head  
And then get off . . . and go away  
To ride again . . . some other day!

Ode

If this is spring  
You can have the thing!

Old Hand

Love is a dream  
And love is pain,  
Love is a song  
And love is a chain.  
But love is a thing  
We can't forego  
Take my word for it  
I've tried . . .  
I know!

Observation

A mermaid was a fabled sea creature  
Cold-eyed  
But beautiful of face.  
Enchanting . . . heartless.  
Half woman.  
Half fish!  
Do you know,  
I looked about me to-day  
And thought  
Of how many women  
Are really  
Mermaids!  
Fall Fires  
O scudding sky-O windy day  
You snare my soul.  
And fey . . . as fey

I wander down a curving street  
To scuff the leaves against my feet  
And smell the smoke that curls the air  
And find the Autumn wondrous fair!

#### Now is the Time

Now is the time when falling snow  
Drifts soft as flowerlets.  
Far below  
The dark earth stretching in her sleep  
Is full of secrets.  
Children keep one little ear above each cover  
Lest in the night they might discover  
The sound of hoofbeats in the air  
And know that Santa Claus is there!

#### Self-Portrait. (Drawn in Dust on a Table Top)

Tho' I'd love to be neat  
I admit defeat.  
Some women's shoes are on racks  
Mine are in stacks.

I can never find a needle or pin  
They're never in what I put them in.  
And when I emerge in confusion  
From this rudderless fog  
I closely resemble a something  
You'd find under a log!

#### Be Good!

"Be good, my child" the sages said  
And packed me off to early bed.  
I didn't mind when I was small  
And never loitered in the hall  
But climbed the stair and clicked the light  
And closed my eyes against the night.  
But now . . . upon the sill I lean  
And feel the wind across my throat  
And tremble when the moon is new  
And watch the stars the whole night through  
For love has set his sign on me . . .  
And I am neither young . . . nor free!

#### Camouflage

I said:  
"I will sing you a song in the night  
How your eyes wear desire and your voice holds delight  
But I'll sing it so softly you'll never believe  
That this thing is my heart that I wear on my sleeve.



## Observation

To find an oyster in a seafood salad  
Is quite a surprise to the average "palad".

## Sixteen

How can a guy absorb this knowledge  
And get himself ready for ruddy college;  
How can he concentrate at all  
When he just passed a dream in the upper hall!

## Hush

There is an hour  
When earth and sky  
Merge in the twilight  
With a sort of sigh.  
Trees touch the skyline . . .  
Birds, the earth,  
And stars are shaken  
With twinkling mirth.  
And it's just as well  
If you're all alone  
To plug the line  
Of your telephone!

## First Snow

Just a thin flurry  
But the first snow!  
Always exciting . . .  
Full of pictures . . .  
Overstockings of red wool,  
Mittens to match,  
And a toboggan cap  
With a bob on it.  
Bruised thumbs  
From struggling with tight overshoes -  
A plaid kilt  
With a green velveteen jacket  
And a real lace collar.  
A teacher's face,  
Slightly harried  
Bending over solicitous buttons.  
The beautiful breathlessness  
Of the first belly flop  
On the small red sleigh.  
Just a thin flurry  
But the first snow!

## Mirror

I looked in a mirror

And all I saw  
Was the pitiless scar  
Of Time's sharp claw.  
But over a candle  
I looked in your eyes  
And there, reflected  
To my surprise  
Was a lovely person . . .  
Unflawed . . . soignée . . .  
So you'll be my mirror  
After to-day!

Portrait

She's sure of herself  
Safe as the Mint.  
And her soul is made  
Of flowered print!

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GOSSIP \*\*\*

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