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# EXULTATIONS

OF

EZRA POUND

LONDON

ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET

M CM IX

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*I am an eternal spirit and the things I  
make are but ephemera, yet I endure:  
Yea, and the little earth crumbles beneath  
our feet and we endure.*

---

TO CARLOS TRACY CHESTER

*"amicitiae longaevitate"*

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I have to thank the Editors of the *English Review* and the *Evening Standard* and *St. James's Gazette* for permission to include in this volume certain poems which originally appeared in those papers.

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## EXULTATIONS

### Guido invites you thus<sup>[1]</sup>

"Lappo I leave behind and Dante too,  
Lo, I would sail the seas with thee alone!  
Talk me no love talk, no bought-cheap fiddl'ry,  
Mine is the ship and thine the merchandise,  
All the blind earth knows not th' emprise  
Whereto thou calledst and whereto I call.

Lo, I have seen thee bound about with dreams,  
Lo, I have known thy heart and its desire;  
Life, all of it, my sea, and all men's streams  
Are fused in it as flames of an altar fire!

Lo, thou hast voyaged not! The ship is mine."

[1] The reference is to Dante's sonnet "Guido vorrei...."

### Night Litany

O Dieu, purifiez nos cœurs!  
purifiez nos cœurs!

Yea the lines hast thou laid unto me  
in pleasant places,  
And the beauty of this thy Venice  
hast thou shown unto me  
Until is its loveliness become unto me  
a thing of tears.

O God, what great kindness  
have we done in times past  
and forgotten it,  
That thou givest this wonder unto us,  
O God of waters?

O God of the night  
What great sorrow  
Cometh unto us,  
That thou thus repayest us  
Before the time of its coming?

O God of silence,  
Purifiez nos cœurs,  
Purifiez nos cœurs,

For we have seen  
The glory of the shadow of the  
    likeness of thine handmaid,  
Yea, the glory of the shadow  
    of thy Beauty hath walked

Upon the shadow of the waters  
    In this thy Venice.  
    And before the holiness  
Of the shadow of thy handmaid  
    Have I hidden mine eyes,  
    O God of waters.

O God of silence,  
    Purifiez nos cœurs,  
    Purifiez nos cœurs,  
O God of waters,  
    make clean our hearts within us  
And our lips to show forth thy praise,  
    For I have seen the  
Shadow of this thy Venice  
Floating upon the waters,  
    And thy stars  
Have seen this thing out of their far courses  
Have they seen this thing,  
    O God of waters,  
Even as are thy stars  
Silent unto us in their far-coursing,  
Even so is mine heart  
    become silent within me.

*Purifiez nos cœurs*  
*O God of the silence,*  
*Purifiez nos cœurs*  
*O God of waters.*

## **Sandalphon**

The angel of prayer according to the Talmud stands unmoved  
among the angels of wind and fire, who die as their one song is  
finished, also as he gathers the prayers they turn to flowers in  
his  
hands.

And these about me die,  
Because the pain of the infinite singing  
Slayeth them.  
Ye that have sung of the pain of the earth-horde's  
    age-long crusading,  
Ye know somewhat the strain,  
    the sad-sweet wonder-pain of such singing.  
And therefore ye know after what fashion  
This singing hath power destroying.

Yea, these about me, bearing such song in homage  
Unto the Mover of Circles,  
Die for the might of their praising,  
And the autumn of their marcescent wings  
Maketh ever new loam for my forest;  
And these grey ash trees hold within them  
All the secrets of whatso things  
They dreamed before their praises,  
And in this grove my flowers,  
Fruit of prayerful powers,  
Have first their thought of life  
    And then their being.

Ye marvel that I die not! *forsitan!*  
Thinking me kin with such as may not weep,  
Thinking me part of them that die for praising

—yea, tho' it be praising,  
past the power of man's mortality to  
dream or name its phases,  
—yea, tho' it chant and paeon  
past the might of earth-dwelt  
soul to think on,  
—yea, tho' it be praising  
as these the winged ones die of.

Ye think me one insensate  
                                  else die I also  
Sith these about me die,  
And if I, watching  
Ever the multiplex jewel, of beryl and jasper and sapphire  
Make of these prayers of earth ever new flowers;  
Marvel and wonder!  
Marvel and wonder even as I,  
Giving to prayer new language  
And causing the works to speak  
Of the earth-horde's age-lasting longing,  
Even as I marvel and wonder, and know not,  
Yet keep my watch in the ash wood.

### Sestina: Altaforte

LOQUITUR: *En* Bertrams de Born.

Dante Alighieri put this man in hell for that he was a stirrer-  
up  
of strife.  
Eccovi!  
Judge ye!  
Have I dug him up again?  
The scene is at his castle, Altaforte. "Papiols" is his jongleur.  
"The Leopard," the *device* of Richard (Cœur de Lion).

I

Damn it all! all this our South stinks peace.  
You whoreson dog, Papiols, come! Let's to music!  
I have no life save when the swords clash.  
But ah! when I see the standards gold, vair, purple, opposing  
And the broad fields beneath them turn crimson,  
Then howl I my heart nigh mad with rejoicing.

II

In hot summer have I great rejoicing  
When the tempests kill the earth's foul peace,  
And the light'nings from black heav'n flash crimson,  
And the fierce thunders roar me their music  
And the winds shriek through the clouds mad, opposing,  
And through all the riven skies God's swords clash.

III

Hell grant soon we hear again the swords clash!  
And the shrill neighs of destriers in battle rejoicing,  
Spiked breast to spiked breast opposing!  
Better one hour's stour than a year's peace  
With fat boards, bawds, wine and frail music!  
Bah! there's no wine like the blood's crimson!

IV

And I love to see the sun rise blood-crimson.  
And I watch his spears through the dark clash  
And it fills all my heart with rejoicing  
And pries wide my mouth with fast music  
When I see him so scorn and defy peace,

His lone might 'gainst all darkness opposing.

V

The man who fears war and squats opposing  
My words for stour, hath no blood of crimson  
But is fit only to rot in womanish peace  
Far from where worth's won and the swords clash  
For the death of such sluts I go rejoicing;  
Yea, I fill all the air with my music.

VI

Papiols, Papiols, to the music!  
There's no sound like to swords swords opposing,  
No cry like the battle's rejoicing  
When our elbows and swords drip the crimson  
And our charges 'gainst "The Leopard's" rush clash.  
May God damn for ever all who cry "Peace!"

VII

And let the music of the swords make them crimson!  
Hell grant soon we hear again the swords clash!  
Hell blot black for alway the thought "Peace"!

### **Piere Vidal Old**

It is of Piere Vidal, the fool par excellence of all Provence, of whom the tale tells how he ran mad, as a wolf, because of his love for Loba of Penautier, and how men hunted him with dogs through the mountains of Cabaret and brought him for dead to the dwelling of this Loba (she-wolf) of Penautier, and how she and her Lord had him healed and made welcome, and he stayed some time at that court. He speaks:

When I but think upon the great dead days  
And turn my mind upon that splendid madness,  
Lo! I do curse my strength  
And blame the sun his gladness;  
For that the one is dead  
And the red sun mocks my sadness.

Behold me, Vidal, that was fool of fools!  
Swift as the king wolf was I and as strong  
When tall stags fled me through the alder brakes,  
And every jongleur knew me in his song,  
And the hounds fled and the deer fled  
And none fled over long.

Even the grey pack knew me and knew fear.  
God! how the swiftest hind's blood spurted hot  
Over the sharpened teeth and purpling lips!  
Hot was that hind's blood yet it scorched me not  
As did first scorn, then lips of the Penautier!  
Aye ye are fools, if ye think time can blot

From Piere Vidal's remembrance that blue night,  
God! but the purple of the sky was deep!  
Clear, deep, translucent, so the stars me seemed  
Set deep in crystal; and because my sleep  
—Rare visitor—came not,—the Saints I guerdon  
For that restlessness—Piere set to keep

One more fool's vigil with the hollyhocks.  
Swift came the Loba, as a branch that's caught,  
Tom, green and silent in the swollen Rhone,

Green was her mantle, close, and wrought  
Of some thin silk stuff that's scarce stuff at all,  
But like a mist wherethrough her white form fought,

And conquered! Ah God! conquered!  
Silent my mate came as the night was still.  
Speech? Words? Faugh! Who talks of words and love?!  
Hot is such love and silent,  
Silent as fate is, and as strong until  
It faints in taking and in giving all.

Stark, keen, triumphant, till it plays at death.  
God! she was white then, splendid as some tomb  
High wrought of marble, and the panting breath  
Ceased utterly. Well, then I waited, drew,  
Half-sheathed, then naked from its saffron sheath  
Drew full this dagger that doth tremble here.

Just then she woke and mocked the less keen blade.  
Ah God, the Loba! and my only mate!  
Was there such flesh made ever and unmade!  
God curse the years that turn such women grey!  
Behold here Vidal, that was hunted, flayed,  
Shamed and yet bowed not and that won at last.

And yet I curse the sun for his red gladness,  
I that have known strath, garth, brake, dale,  
And every run-way of the wood through that great madness,  
Behold me shrivelled as an old oak's trunk  
And made men's mock'ry in my rotten sadness!

No man hath heard the glory of my days:  
No man hath dared and won his dare as I:  
One night, one body and one welding flame!  
What do ye own, ye niggards! that can buy  
Such glory of the earth? Or who will win  
Such battle-guerdon with his "prowesse high"?

O Age gone lax! O stunted followers,  
That mask at passions and desire desires,  
Behold me shrivelled, and your mock of mocks;  
And yet I mock you by the mighty fires  
That burnt me to this ash.

\* \* \* \* \*

Ah! Cabaret! Ah Cabaret, thy hills again!

\* \* \* \* \*

Take your hands off me!... [*Sniffing the air.*  
Ha! this scent is hot!

## **Ballad of the Goodly Fere<sup>[1]</sup>**

Simon Zelotes speaketh it somewhile after the Crucifixion.

Ha' we lost the goodliest fere o' all  
For the priests and the gallows tree?  
Aye lover he was of brawny men,  
O' ships and the open sea.

When they came wi' a host to take Our Man  
His smile was good to see,  
"First let these go!" quo' our Goodly Fere,  
"Or I'll see ye damned," says he.

Aye he sent us out through the crossed high spears  
And the scorn of his laugh rang free,  
"Why took ye not me when I walked about  
Alone in the town?" says he.

Oh we drank his "Hale" in the good red wine  
When we last made company,

No capon priest was the Goodly Fere  
But a man o' men was he.

I ha' seen him drive a hundred men  
Wi' a bundle o' cords swung free,  
That they took the high and holy house  
For their pawn and treasury.

They'll no' get him a' in a book I think  
Though they write it cunningly;  
No mouse of the scrolls was the Goodly Fere  
But aye loved the open sea.

If they think they ha' snared our Goodly Fere  
They are fools to the last degree.  
"I'll go to the feast," quo' our Goodly Fere,  
"Though I go to the gallows tree."

"Ye ha' seen me heal the lame and blind,  
And wake the dead," says he,  
"Ye shall see one thing to master all:  
'Tis how a brave man dies on the tree."

A son of God was the Goodly Fere  
That bade us his brothers be.  
I ha' seen him cow a thousand men.  
I have seen him upon the tree.

He cried no cry when they drave the nails  
And the blood gushed hot and free,  
The hounds of the crimson sky gave tongue  
But never a cry cried he.

I ha' seen him cow a thousand men  
On the hills o' Galilee,  
They whined as he walked out calm between,  
Wi' his eyes like the grey o' the sea.

Like the sea that brooks no voyaging  
With the winds unleashed and free,  
Like the sea that he cowed at Genseret  
Wi' tvey words spoke' suddently.

A master of men was the Goodly Fere,  
A mate of the wind and sea,  
If they think they ha' slain our Goodly Fere  
They are fools eternally.

I ha' seen him eat o' the honey-comb  
Sin' they nailed him to the tree.

[1] Fere = Mate, Companion.

*\*\*\* The Publisher desires to state that the "Ballad of the Goodly Fere"—by the wish of the Author—is reproduced exactly as it appeared in the "English Review."*

### Hymn III

From the Latin of Marc Antony Flaminius, sixteenth century.

As a fragile and lovely flower unfolds its gleaming  
foliage on the breast of the fostering earth, if  
the dew and the rain draw it forth;  
So doth my tender mind flourish, if it be fed with the  
sweet dew of the fostering spirit,  
Lacking this, it beginneth straightway to languish,  
even as a floweret born upon dry earth, if the

dew and the rain tend it not.

### **Sestina for Ysolt**

There comes upon me will to speak in praise  
Of things most fragile in their loveliness;  
Because the sky hath wept all this long day  
And wrapped men's hearts within its cloak of greyness,  
Because they look not down I sing the stars,  
Because 'tis still mid-March I praise May's flowers.

Also I praise long hands that lie as flowers  
Which though they labour not are worthy praise,  
And praise deep eyes like pools wherein the stars  
Gleam out reflected in their loveliness,  
For whoso look on such there is no greyness  
May hang about his heart on any day.

The other things that I would praise to-day?  
Besides white hands and all the fragile flowers,  
And by their praise dispel the evening's greyness?  
I praise dim hair that worthiest is of praise  
And dream upon its unbound loveliness,  
And how therethrough mine eyes have seen the stars.

Yea, through that cloud mine eyes have seen the stars  
That drift out slowly when night steals the day,  
Through such a cloud meseems their loveliness  
Surpasses that of all the other flowers.  
For that one night I give all nights my praise  
And love therefrom the twilight's coming greyness.

There is a stillness in this twilight greyness  
Although the rain hath veiled the flow'ry stars,  
They seem to listen as I weave this praise  
Of what I have not seen all this grey day,  
And they will tell my praise unto the flowers  
When May shall bid them in in loveliness.

O ye I love, who hold this loveliness  
Near to your hearts, may never any greyness  
Enshroud your hearts when ye would gather flowers,  
Or bind your eyes when ye would see the stars;  
But alway do I give ye flowers by day,  
And when day's plucked I give ye stars for praise.

But most, thou Flower, whose eyes are like the stars,  
With whom my dreams bide all the live-long day,  
Within thy hands would I rest all my praise.

### **Portrait**

From "La Mère Inconnue."

Now would I weave her portrait out of all dim splendour.  
Of Provence and far halls of memory,  
Lo, there come echoes, faint diversity  
Of blended bells at even's end, or  
As the distant seas should send her  
The tribute of their trembling, ceaselessly  
Resonant. Out of all dreams that be,  
Say, shall I bid the deepest dreams attend her?

Nay! For I have seen the purplest shadows stand  
Always with reverent chere that looked on her,  
Silence himself is grown her worshipper  
And ever doth attend her in that land



Wherein she reigneth, wherefore let there stir  
Naught but the softest voices, praising her.

### **"Fair Helena" by Rackham**

*"What I love best in all the world?"*

When the purple twilight is unbound,  
To watch her slow, tall grace  
    and its wistful loveliness,  
And to know her face  
    is in the shadow there,  
Just by two stars beneath that cloud—  
The soft, dim cloud of her hair,  
And to think my voice  
    can reach to her  
As but the rumour of some tree-bound stream,  
Heard just beyond the forest's edge,  
Until she all forgets I am,  
And knows of me  
Naught but my dream's felicity.

### **Laudantes Decem Pulchritudinis**

#### **Johannae Templi**

I

When your beauty is grown old in all men's songs,  
And my poor words are lost amid that throng,  
Then you will know the truth of my poor words,  
And mayhap dreaming of the wistful throng  
That hopeless sigh your praises in their songs,  
You will think kindly then of these mad words.

II

I am torn, torn with thy beauty,  
O Rose of the sharpest thorn!  
O Rose of the crimson beauty,  
Why hast thou awakened the sleeper?  
Why hast thou awakened the heart within me,  
O Rose of the crimson thorn?

III

The unappeasable loveliness  
    is calling to me out of the wind,  
And because your name  
    is written upon the ivory doors,  
The wave in my heart is as a green wave, unconfined,  
Tossing the white foam toward you;  
And the lotus that pours  
Her fragrance into the purple cup,  
Is more to be gained with the foam  
Than are you with these words of mine.

IV

*He speaks to the moonlight concerning the Beloved.*

Pale hair that the moon has shaken  
Down over the dark breast of the sea,  
O magic her beauty has shaken  
About the heart of me;  
Out of you have I woven a dream  
That shall walk in the lonely vale

Betwixt the high hill and the low hill,  
Until the pale stream  
Of the souls of men quench and grow still.

V

*Voices speaking to the sun.*

Red leaf that art blown upward and out and over  
The green sheaf of the world,  
And through the dim forest and under  
The shadowed arches and the aisles,  
We, who are older than thou art,  
Met and remembered when his eyes beheld her  
In the garden of the peach-trees,  
In the day of the blossoming.

VI

I stood on the hill of Yrma  
                  when the winds were a-hurrying,  
With the grasses a-bending  
                  I followed them,  
Through the brown grasses of Ahva  
                  unto the green of Asedon.  
I have rested with the voices  
                  in the gardens of Athor,  
I have lain beneath the peach-trees  
                  in the hour of the purple:

Because I had awaited in  
                  the garden of the peach-trees,  
Because I had feared not  
                  in the forest of my mind,  
Mine eyes beheld the vision of the blossom  
There in the peach-gardens past Asedon.

O winds of Yrma, let her again come unto me,  
Whose hair ye held unbound in the gardens of Athor!

VII

Because of the beautiful white shoulders and the rounded  
breasts

I can in no wise forget my beloved of the peach-trees,  
And the little winds that speak when the dawn is unfurled  
And the rose-colour in the grey oak-leaf's fold

When it first comes, and the glamour that rests  
On the little streams in the evening; all of these  
Call me to her, and all the loveliness in the world  
Binds me to my beloved with strong chains of gold.

VIII

If the rose-petals which have fallen upon my eyes  
And if the perfect faces which I see at times  
When my eyes are closed—  
Faces fragile, pale, yet flushed a little, like petals of roses:  
If these things have confused my memories of her  
So that I could not draw her face  
Even if I had skill and the colours,  
Yet because her face is so like these things  
They but draw me nearer unto her in my thought  
And thoughts of her come upon my mind gently,  
As dew upon the petals of roses.

IX

*He speaks to the rain.*

O pearls that hang on your little silver chains,  
The innumerable voices that are whispering  
Among you as you are drawn aside by the wind,  
Have brought to my mind the soft and eager speech

Of one who hath great loveliness,

Which is subtle as the beauty of the rains  
That hang low in the moonshine and bring  
The May softly among us, and unbind  
The streams and the crimson and white flowers and reach  
Deep down into the secret places.

X

The glamour of the soul hath come upon me,  
And as the twilight comes upon the roses,  
Walking silently among them,  
So have the thoughts of my heart  
Gone out slowly in the twilight  
Toward my beloved,  
Toward the crimson rose, the fairest.

### **Aux Belles de Londres**

I am aweary with the utter and beautiful weariness  
And with the ultimate wisdom and with things terrene,  
I am aweary with your smiles and your laughter,  
And the sun and the winds again  
Reclaim their booty and the heart o' me.

### **Francesca**

You came in out of the night  
And there were flowers in your hands,  
Now you will come out of a confusion of people,  
Out of a turmoil of speech about you.

I who have seen you amid the primal things  
Was angry when they spoke your name  
In ordinary places.  
I would that the cool waves might flow over my mind,  
And that the world should dry as a dead leaf,  
Or as a dandelion seed-pod and be swept away,  
So that I might find you again,  
Alone.

### **Greek Epigram**

Day and night are never weary,  
Nor yet is God of creating  
For day and night their torch-bearers  
The aube and the crepuscule.

So, when I weary of praising the dawn and the sun-set,  
Let me be no more counted among the immortals;  
But number me amid the wearying ones,  
Let me be a man as the herd,  
And as the slave that is given in barter.

### **Christophori Columbi Tumulus**

From the Latin of Hipolytus Capilupus, Early Cent XVI.

Genoan, glory of Italy, Columbus thou sure light,  
Alas the urn takes even thee so soon out-blown.  
Its little space

Doth hold thee, whom Oceanus had not the might  
Within his folds to hold, altho' his broad embrace  
Doth hold all lands.

Bark-borne beyond his bound'ries unto Hind thou wast  
Where scarce Fame's volant self the way had cast.

### **Plotinus**

As one that would draw through the node of things,  
Back sweeping to the vortex of the cone,  
Cloistered about with memories, alone  
In chaos, while the waiting silence sings:

Obliviate of cycles' wanderings  
I was an atom on creation's throne  
And knew all nothing my unconquered own.  
God! Should I be the hand upon the strings?!

But I was lonely as a lonely child.  
I cried amid the void and heard no cry,  
And then for utter loneliness, made I  
New thoughts as crescent images of *me*.  
And with them was my essence reconciled  
While fear went forth from mine eternity.

### **On His Own Face in a Glass**

O strange face there in the glass!  
O ribald company, O saintly host,  
O sorrow-swept my fool,  
What answer? O ye myriad  
That strive and play and pass,  
Jest, challenge, counterlie?  
I? I? I?  
And ye?

### **Histrion**

No man hath dared to write this thing as yet,  
And yet I know, how that the souls of all men great  
At times pass through us,  
And we are melted into them, and are not  
Save reflexions of their souls.  
Thus am I Dante for a space and am  
One François Villon, ballad-lord and thief  
Or am such holy ones I may not write,  
Lest blasphemy be writ against my name;  
This for an instant and the flame is gone.

'Tis as in midmost us there glows a sphere  
Translucent, molten gold, that is the "I"  
And into this some form projects itself:  
Christus, or John, or eke the Florentine;  
And as the clear space is not if a form's  
Imposed thereon,  
So cease we from all being for the time,  
And these, the Masters of the Soul, live on.

### **The Eyes**

Rest Master, for we be a-weary, weary

And would feel the fingers of the wind  
Upon these lids that lie over us  
Sodden and lead-heavy.

Rest brother, for lo! the dawn is without!  
The yellow flame paleth  
And the wax runs low.

Free us, for without be goodly colours,  
Green of the wood-moss and flower colours,  
And coolness beneath the trees.

Free us, for we perish  
In this ever-flowing monotony  
Of ugly print marks, black  
Upon white parchment.

Free us, for there is one  
Whose smile more availeth  
Than all the age-old knowledge of thy books:  
And we would look thereon.

## **Defiance**

Ye blood-red spears-men of the dawn's array  
That drive my dusk-clad knights of dream away,  
Hold! For I will not yield.

My moated soul shall dream in your despite  
A refuge for the vanquished hosts of night  
That *can* not yield.

## **Song**

Love thou thy dream  
All base love scorning,  
Love thou the wind  
And here take warning  
That dreams alone can truly be,  
For 'tis in dream I come to thee.

## **Nel Biancheggjar**

Blue-Grey, and white, and white-of-rose,  
The flowers of the West's fore-dawn unclose.  
I feel the dusky softness whirr  
Of colour, as upon a dulcimer  
"Her" dreaming fingers lay between the tunes,  
As when the living music swoons  
But dies not quite, because for love of us  
—knowing our state  
How that 'tis troublous—  
It wills not die to leave us desolate.

## **Nils Lykke**

Beautiful, infinite memories  
That are a-plucking at my heart,  
Why will you be ever calling and a-calling,  
And a-murmuring in the dark there?  
And a-reaching out your long hands  
Between me and my beloved?

And why will you be ever a-casting  
The black shadow of your beauty  
On the white face of my beloved  
And a-glinting in the pools of her eyes?

### **A Song of the Virgin Mother**

*In the play "Los Pastores de Belen."*

From the Spanish of Lope de Vega.

As ye go through these palm-trees  
O holy angel;  
Sith sleepeth my child here  
Still ye the branches.

O Bethlehem palm-trees  
That move to the anger  
Of winds in their fury,  
Tempestuous voices,  
Make ye no clamour,  
Run ye less swiftly,  
Sith sleepeth the child here  
Still ye your branches.

He the divine child  
Is here a-wearied  
Of weeping the earth-pain,  
Here for his rest would he  
Cease from his mourning,  
Only a little while,  
Sith sleepeth this child here  
Stay ye the branches.

Cold be the fierce winds,  
Traucherous round him.  
Ye see that I have not  
Wherewith to guard him,  
O angels, divine ones  
That pass us a-flying,  
Sith sleepeth my child here  
Stay ye the branches.

### **Planh for the Young English King**

*That is, Prince Henry Plantagenet, elder brother to  
Richard "Coeur de Lion."*

From the Provençal of Bertrams de Born "Si tuit li dol elh  
plor elh marrimen."

If all the grief and woe and bitterness,  
All dolour, ill and every evil chance  
That ever came upon this grieving world  
Were set together they would seem but light  
Against the death of the young English King.  
Worth lieth riven and Youth dolorous,  
The world o'ershadowed, soiled and overcast,  
Void of all joy and full of ire and sadness.

Grieving and sad and full of bitterness  
Are left in teen the liegemen courteous,  
The joglars supple and the troubadours.  
O'er much hath ta'en Sir Death that deadly warrior  
In taking from them the young English King,

Who made the freest hand seem covetous.  
'Las! Never was nor will be in this world  
The balance for this loss in ire and sadness!

O skilful Death and full of bitterness,  
Well mayst thou boast that thou the best chevalier  
That any folk e'er had, hast from us taken;  
Sith nothing is that unto worth pertaineth  
But had its life in the young English King,  
And better were it, should God grant his pleasure  
That he should live than many a Irving dastard  
That doth but wound the good with ire and sadness.

From this faint world, how full of bitterness  
Love takes his way and holds his joy deceitful,  
Sith no thing is but turneth unto anguish  
And each to-day 'vails less than yestere'en,  
Let each man visage this young English King  
That was most valiant mid all worthiest men!  
Gone is his body fine and amorous,  
Whence have we grief, discord and deepest sadness.

Him, whom it pleased for our great bitterness  
To come to earth to draw us from misventure,  
Who drank of death for our salvacioun,  
Him do we pray as to a Lord most righteous  
And humble eke, that the young English King  
He please to pardon, as true pardon is,  
And bid go in with honoured companions  
There where there is no grief, nor shall be sadness.

### **Alba Innominata**

From the Provençal.

In a garden where the whitethorn spreads her leaves  
My lady hath her love lain close beside her,  
Till the warder cries the dawn—Ah dawn that grieves!  
Ah God! Ah God! That dawn should come so soon!

"Please God that night, dear night should never cease,  
Nor that my love should parted be from me,  
Nor watch cry 'Dawn'—Ah dawn that slayeth peace!  
Ah God! Ah God! That dawn should come so soon!

"Fair friend and sweet, thy lips! Our lips again!  
Lo, in the meadow there the birds give song!  
Ours be the love and Jealousy's the pain!  
Ah God! Ah God! That dawn should come so soon!

"Sweet friend and fair take we our joy again  
Down in the garden, where the birds are loud,  
Till the warder's reed astrain  
Cry God! Ah God! That dawn should come so soon!

"Of that sweet wind that comes from Far-Away  
Have I drunk deep of my Beloved's breath,  
Yea! of my Love's that is so dear and gay.  
Ah God! Ah God! That dawn should come so soon!"

*Envoi.*

Fair is this damsel and right courteous,  
And many watch her beauty's gracious way.  
Her heart toward love is no wise traitorous.  
Ah God! Ah God! That dawns should come so soon!

### **Planh**

*It is of the white thoughts that he saw in the Forest.*

White Poppy, heavy with dreams,  
O White Poppy, who art wiser than love,  
Though I am hungry for their lips  
    When I see them a-hiding  
And a-passing out and in through the shadows  
—There in the pine wood it is,  
And they are white, White Poppy,  
They are white like the clouds in the forest of the sky  
Ere the stars arise to their hunting.

O White Poppy, who art wiser than love,  
I am come for peace, yea from the hunting  
Am I come to thee for peace.  
Out of a new sorrow it is,  
That my hunting hath brought me.

White Poppy, heavy with dreams,  
Though I am hungry for their lips  
    When I see them a-hiding  
And a-passing out and in through the shadows  
—And it is white they are—  
But if one should look at me with the old hunger in her eyes,  
How will I be answering her eyes?

For I have followed the white folk of the forest.

Aye! It's a long hunting  
And it's a deep hunger I have when I see them a-gliding  
And a-flickering there, where the trees stand apart.

But oh, it is sorrow and sorrow  
When love dies-down in the heart.

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