

Dialogue on the Headland

SHE: You'll not forget these rocks and what I told you?

HE: How could I? Never: whatever happens.

SHE: What do you think might happen?  
Might you fall out of love? —did you mean that?

HE: Never, never! 'Whatever' was a sop  
For jealous listeners in the shadows.

SHE: You haven't answered me. I asked:  
'What do you think might happen?'

HE: Whatever happens: though the skies  
should fall  
Raining their larks and vultures in our laps  
—

SHE: 'Though the seas turn to slime' —say  
that —  
'Though water—snakes be hatched with  
six heads.'

HE: Though the seas turn to slime, or tower  
In an arching wave above us, three miles  
high —

SHE: 'Though she should break with you,' —  
dare you say that —'

HE: I had that in my mind to say, or nearly;  
It hurt so much I choked it back.

SHE: How many other days can't you  
forget?  
How many other loves and landscapes?

HE: You are jealous?

SHE: Damnably.

HE: The past is past.

SHE: And this?

HE: Whatever happens, this goes on.

SHE: Without a future? Sweetheart, tell me  
now:

What do you want of me? I must know  
that.

HE: Nothing that isn't freely mine already.

SHE: Say what is freely yours and you shall  
have it.

HE: Nothing that, loving you, I could dare  
take.

SHE: O for an answer with no 'nothing' in it!

HE: Then give me everything that's left.

SHE: Left after what?

HE: After whatever happens:  
Skies have already fallen, seas are slime,  
Water snakes poke and peer six—  
headedly—

SHE: And I lie snugly in the Devil's arms.

HE: I said: 'Whatever happens.' Are you  
crying?

SHE: You'll not forget me —ever, ever,  
ever?