

**Strong Son of God, immortal Love,**

Whom we, that have not seen thy face, By faith, and  
faith alone, embrace,

Believing where we cannot prove;

**Thine are these orbs of light and shade;**

Thou madest Life in man and brute; Thou madest  
Death; and lo, thy foot

Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust: Thou madest man, he  
knows not why, He thinks he was not made to die; And  
thou hast made him: thou art just.

**Thou seemest human and divine,**

The highest, holiest manhood, thou. Our wills are  
ours, we know not how;

Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

**Our little systems have their day;**

They have their day and cease to be: They are but  
broken lights of thee,

And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

**We have but faith: we cannot know;**

For knowledge is of things we see And yet we trust it  
comes from thee,

A beam in darkness: let it grow.

**Let knowledge grow from more to more,**

But more of reverence in us dwell; That mind and  
soul, according well,

May make one music as before,

**But vaster. We are fools and slight;**

We mock thee when we do not fear: But help thy  
foolish ones to bear;

Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

**Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;**

What seem'd my worth since I began; For merit lives  
from man to man,

And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

**Forgive my grief for one removed,**

Thy creature, whom I found so fair. I trust he lives in  
thee, and there

I find him worthier to be loved.

**Forgive these wild and wandering cries,**

Confusions of a wasted youth; Forgive them where  
they fail in truth,

And in thy wisdom make me wise.

I I held it truth, with him who sings

To one clear harp in divers tones, That men may  
rise on stepping-stones

Of their dead selves to higher things.

**But who shall so forecast the years**

And find in loss a gain to match? Or reach a hand  
thro' time to catch

The far-off interest of tears?

**Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,**

Let darkness keep her raven gloss: Ah, sweeter to  
be drunk with loss,

To dance with death, to beat the ground,

**Than that the victor Hours should scorn**

The long result of love, and boast, 'Behold the man  
that loved and lost,

But all he was is overworn.'

II Old Yew, which graspest at the stones

That name the under-lying dead, Thy fibres net the  
dreamless head,

Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

**The seasons bring the flower again,**

And bring the firstling to the flock; And in the dusk of  
thee, the clock

Beats out the little lives of men.

**O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,**

Who changest not in any gale, Nor branding  
summer suns avail

To touch thy thousand years of gloom:

**And gazing on thee, sullen tree,**

Sick for thy stubborn hardihood, I seem to fail from  
out my blood

And grow incorporate into thee.

III O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,

O Priestess in the vaults of Death, O sweet and  
bitter in a breath,

What whispers from thy lying lip?

**'The stars,' she whispers, 'blindly run;**

A web is wov'n across the sky; From out waste  
places comes a cry,

And murmurs from the dying sun:

**'And all the phantom, Nature, stands—**

With all the music in her tone, A hollow echo of my  
own,—

A hollow form with empty hands.'

**And shall I take a thing so blind,**

Embrace her as my natural good; Or crush her, like  
a vice of blood,

Upon the threshold of the mind?

IV To Sleep I give my powers away;

My will is bondsman to the dark; I sit within a  
harmless bark,

And with my heart I muse and say:

**O heart, how fares it with thee now,**

That thou should'st fail from thy desire, Who  
scarcely darest to inquire,

'What is it makes me beat so low?'

**Something it is which thou hast lost,**

Some pleasure from thine early years. Break, thou  
deep vase of chilling tears,

That grief hath shaken into frost!

**Such clouds of nameless trouble cross**

All night below the darken'd eyes; With morning  
wakes the will, and cries,

'Thou shalt not be the fool of loss.'

V I sometimes hold it half a sin

To put in words the grief I feel; For words, like  
Nature, half reveal

And half conceal the Soul within.

**But, for the unquiet heart and brain,**

A use in measured language lies; The sad mechanic  
exercise,

Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

**In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,**

Like coarsest clothes against the cold: But that large  
grief which these enfold

Is given in outline and no more.

VI One writes, that 'Other friends remain,'

That 'Loss is common to the race'— And common is  
the commonplace,

And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

**That loss is common would not make**

My own less bitter, rather more: Too common!  
Never morning wore

To evening, but some heart did break.

**O father, wheresoe'er thou be,**

Who pledgest now thy gallant son; A shot, ere half  
thy draught be done,

Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

**O mother, praying God will save**

Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd, His  
heavy-shotted hammock-shroud

Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

**Ye know no more than I who wrought**

At that last hour to please him well; Who mused on  
all I had to tell,

And something written, something thought;

**Expecting still his advent home;**

And ever met him on his way With wishes, thinking,  
'here to-day,'

Or 'here to-morrow will he come.'

**O somewhere, meek, unconscious dove,**

That sittest ranging golden hair; And glad to find  
thyself so fair,

Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

**For now her father's chimney glows**

In expectation of a guest; And thinking 'this will  
please him best,'

She takes a riband or a rose;

**For he will see them on to-night;**

And with the thought her colour burns; And, having  
left the glass, she turns

Once more to set a ringlet right;

**And, even when she turn'd, the curse**

Had fallen, and her future Lord Was drown'd in  
passing thro' the ford,

Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

**O what to her shall be the end?**

And what to me remains of good? To her, perpetual  
maidenhood,

And unto me no second friend.

VII Dark house, by which once more I stand

Here in the long unlovely street, Doors, where my  
heart was used to beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,

**A hand that can be clasp'd no more—**

Behold me, for I cannot sleep, And like a guilty thing  
I creep

At earliest morning to the door.

**He is not here; but far away**

The noise of life begins again, And ghastly thro' the  
drizzling rain

On the bald street breaks the blank day.

VIII A happy lover who has come

To look on her that loves him well, Who 'lights and  
rings the gateway bell,

And learns her gone and far from home;

**He saddens, all the magic light**

Dies off at once from bower and hall, And all the  
place is dark, and all

The chambers emptied of delight:

**So find I every pleasant spot**

In which we two were wont to meet, The field, the  
chamber, and the street,

For all is dark where thou art not.

**Yet as that other, wandering there**

In those deserted walks, may find A flower beat with  
rain and wind,

Which once she foster'd up with care;

**So seems it in my deep regret,**

O my forsaken heart, with thee And this poor flower  
of poesy

Which little cared for fades not yet.

**But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,**

I go to plant it on his tomb, That if it can it there may  
bloom,

Or, dying, there at least may die.

IX Fair ship, that from the Italian shore

Sailest the placid ocean-plains With my lost Arthur's  
loved remains,

Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

**So draw him home to those that mourn**

In vain; a favourable speed Ruffle thy mirror'd mast,  
and lead

Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

**All night no ruder air perplex**

Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright As our pure  
love, thro' early light

Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

**Sphere all your lights around, above;**

Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow; Sleep,  
gentle winds, as he sleeps now,

My friend, the brother of my love;

**My Arthur, whom I shall not see**

Till all my widow'd race be run; Dear as the mother  
to the son,

More than my brothers are to me.

X I hear the noise about thy keel;

I hear the bell struck in the night: I see the  
cabin-window bright;

I see the sailor at the wheel.

**Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,**

And travell'd men from foreign lands; And letters  
unto trembling hands;

And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

**So bring him; we have idle dreams:**

This look of quiet flatters thus Our home-bred  
fancies. O to us,

The fools of habit, sweeter seems

**To rest beneath the clover sod,**

That takes the sunshine and the rains, Or where the  
kneeling hamlet drains

The chalice of the grapes of God;

**Than if with thee the roaring wells**

Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine; And hands so  
often clasp'd in mine,

Should toss with tangle and with shells.

XI Calm is the morn without a sound,

Calm as to suit a calmer grief, And only thro' the  
faded leaf

The chestnut pattering to the ground:

**Calm and deep peace on this high world,**

And on these dewes that drench the furze, And all the  
silvery gossamers

That twinkle into green and gold:

**Calm and still light on yon great plain**

That sweeps with all its autumn bowers, And  
crowded farms and lessening towers,

To mingle with the bounding main:

**Calm and deep peace in this wide air,**

These leaves that redden to the fall; And in my  
heart, if calm at all,

If any calm, a calm despair:

**Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,**

And waves that sway themselves in rest, And dead  
calm in that noble breast

Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

XII Lo, as a dove when up she springs

To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe, Some dolorous  
message knit below

The wild pulsation of her wings;

**Like her I go; I cannot stay;**

I leave this mortal ark behind, A weight of nerves  
without a mind,

And leave the cliffs, and haste away

**O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,**

And reach the glow of southern skies, And see the  
sails at distance rise,

And linger weeping on the marge,

**And saying; 'Comes he thus, my friend?**

Is this the end of all my care?' And circle moaning in  
the air:

'Is this the end? Is this the end?'

**And forward dart again, and play**

About the prow, and back return To where the body  
sits, and learn

That I have been an hour away.

XIII Tears of the widower, when he sees

A late-lost form that sleep reveals, And moves his  
doubtful arms, and feels

Her place is empty, fall like these;

**Which weep a loss for ever new,**

A void where heart on heart reposed; And, where  
warm hands have prest and closed,

Silence, till I be silent too.

**Which weep the comrade of my choice,**

An awful thought, a life removed, The  
human-hearted man I loved,

A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

**Come, Time, and teach me, many years,**

I do not suffer in a dream; For now so strange do  
these things seem,

Mine eyes have leisure for their tears;

**My fancies time to rise on wing,**

And glance about the approaching sails, As tho' they  
brought but merchants' bales,

And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV If one should bring me this report,

That thou hadst touch'd the land to-day, And I went  
down unto the quay,

And found thee lying in the port;

**And standing, muffled round with woe,**

Should see thy passengers in rank Come stepping  
lightly down the plank,

And beckoning unto those they know;

**And if along with these should come**

The man I held as half-divine; Should strike a  
sudden hand in mine,

And ask a thousand things of home;

**And I should tell him all my pain,**

And how my life had droop'd of late, And he should  
sorrow o'er my state

And marvel what possess'd my brain;

**And I perceived no touch of change,**

No hint of death in all his frame, But found him all in  
all the same,

I should not feel it to be strange.

XV To-night the winds begin to rise

And roar from yonder dropping day: The last red leaf  
is whirl'd away,

The rooks are blown about the skies;

**The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,**

The cattle huddled on the lea; And wildly dash'd on  
tower and tree

The sunbeam strikes along the world:

**And but for fancies, which aver**

That all thy motions gently pass Athwart a plane of  
molten glass,

I scarce could brook the strain and stir

**That makes the barren branches loud;**

And but for fear it is not so, The wild unrest that lives  
in woe

Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

**That rises upward always higher,**

And onward drags a labouring breast, And topples  
round the dreary west,

A looming bastion fringed with fire.

XVI What words are these have falle'n from me?

Can calm despair and wild unrest Be tenants of a  
single breast,

Or sorrow such a changeling be?

**Or cloth she only seem to take**

The touch of change in calm or storm; But knows no  
more of transient form

In her deep self, than some dead lake

**That holds the shadow of a lark**

Hung in the shadow of a heaven? Or has the shock,  
so harshly given,

Confused me like the unhappy bark

**That strikes by night a craggy shelf,**

And staggers blindly ere she sink? And stunn'd me  
from my power to think

And all my knowledge of myself;

**And made me that delirious man**

Whose fancy fuses old and new, And flashes into  
false and true,

And mingles all without a plan?

XVII Thou comest, much wept for: such a breeze

Compell'd thy canvas, and my prayer Was as the  
whisper of an air

To breathe thee over lonely seas.

**For I in spirit saw thee move**

Thro' circles of the bounding sky, Week after week:  
the days go by:

Come quick, thou bringest all I love.

**Henceforth, wherever thou may'st roam,**

My blessing, like a line of light, Is on the waters day  
and night,

And like a beacon guards thee home.

**So may whatever tempest mars**

Mid-ocean, spare thee, sacred bark; And balmy  
drops in summer dark

Slide from the bosom of the stars.

**So kind an office hath been done,**

Such precious relics brought by thee; The dust of  
him I shall not see

Till all my widow'd race be run.

XVIII 'Tis well; 'tis something; we may stand

Where he in English earth is laid, And from his  
ashes may be made

The violet of his native land.

**'Tis little; but it looks in truth**

As if the quiet bones were blest Among familiar  
names to rest

And in the places of his youth.

**Come then, pure hands, and bear the head**

That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep, And come,  
whatever loves to weep,

And hear the ritual of the dead.

**Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,**

I, falling on his faithful heart, Would breathing thro'  
his lips impart

The life that almost dies in me;

**That dies not, but endures with pain,**

And slowly forms the firmer mind, Treasuring the  
look it cannot find,

The words that are not heard again.

XIX The Danube to the Severn gave

The darken'd heart that beat no more; They laid him  
by the pleasant shore,

And in the hearing of the wave.

**There twice a day the Severn fills;**

The salt sea-water passes by, And hushes half the  
babbling Wye,

And makes a silence in the hills.

**The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,**

And hush'd my deepest grief of all, When fill'd with  
tears that cannot fall,

I brim with sorrow drowning song.

**The tide flows down, the wave again**

Is vocal in its wooded walls; My deeper anguish also  
falls,

And I can speak a little then.

XX The lesser griefs that may be said,

That breathe a thousand tender vows, Are but as  
servants in a house

Where lies the master newly dead;

**Who speak their feeling as it is,**

And weep the fulness from the mind: 'It will be hard,'  
they say, 'to find

Another service such as this.'

**My lighter moods are like to these,**

That out of words a comfort win; But there are other  
griefs within,

And tears that at their fountain freeze;

**For by the hearth the children sit**

Cold in that atmosphere of Death, And scarce  
endure to draw the breath,

Or like to noiseless phantoms flit;

**But open converse is there none,**

So much the vital spirits sink To see the vacant  
chair, and think,

'How good! how kind! and he is gone.'

XXI I sing to him that rests below,

And, since the grasses round me wave, I take the  
grasses of the grave,

And make them pipes whereon to blow.

**The traveller hears me now and then,**

And sometimes harshly will he speak: 'This fellow  
would make weakness weak,

And melt the waxen hearts of men.'

**Another answers, 'Let him be,**

He loves to make parade of pain That with his piping  
he may gain

The praise that comes to constancy.'

**A third is wroth: 'Is this an hour**

For private sorrow's barren song, When more and  
more the people throng

The chairs and thrones of civil power?

**'A time to sicken and to swoon,**

When Science reaches forth her arms To feel from  
world to world, and charms

Her secret from the latest moon?'

**Behold, ye speak an idle thing:**

Ye never knew the sacred dust: I do but sing  
because I must,

And pipe but as the linnets sing:

**And one is glad; her note is gay,**

For now her little ones have ranged; And one is sad;  
her note is changed,

Because her brood is stol'n away.

XXII The path by which we twain did go,

Which led by tracts that pleased us well, Thro' four  
sweet years arose and fell,

From flower to flower, from snow to snow:

**And we with singing cheer'd the way,**

And, crown'd with all the season lent, From April on  
to April went,

And glad at heart from May to May:

**But where the path we walk'd began**

To slant the fifth autumnal slope, As we descended  
following Hope,

There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

**Who broke our fair companionship,**

And spread his mantle dark and cold, And wrapt  
thee formless in the fold,

And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

**And bore thee where I could not see**

Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste, And think, that  
somewhere in the waste

The Shadow sits and waits for me.

XXIII Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,

Or breaking into song by fits, Alone, alone, to where  
he sits,

The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

**Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,**

I wander, often falling lame, And looking back to  
whence I came,

Or on to where the pathway leads;

**And crying, How changed from where it ran**

Thro' lands where not a leaf was dumb; But all the  
lavish hills would hum

The murmur of a happy Pan:

**When each by turns was guide to each,**

And Fancy light from Fancy caught, And Thought  
leapt out to wed with Thought

Ere Thought could wed itself with Speech;

**And all we met was fair and good,**

And all was good that Time could bring, And all the  
secret of the Spring

Moved in the chambers of the blood;

**And many an old philosophy**

On Argive heights divinely sang, And round us all  
the thicket rang

To many a flute of Arcady.

XXIV And was the day of my delight

As pure and perfect as I say? The very source and  
fount of Day

Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

**If all was good and fair we met,**

This earth had been the Paradise It never look'd to  
human eyes

Since our first Sun arose and set.

**And is it that the haze of grief**

Makes former gladness loom so great? The lowness  
of the present state,

That sets the past in this relief?

**Or that the past will always win**

A glory from its being far; And orb into the perfect  
star

We saw not, when we moved therein?

XXV I know that this was Life,—the track

Whereon with equal feet we fared; And then, as  
now, the day prepared

The daily burden for the back.

**But this it was that made me move**

As light as carrier-birds in air; I loved the weight I  
had to bear,

Because it needed help of Love:

**Nor could I weary, heart or limb,**

When mighty Love would cleave in twain The lading  
of a single pain,

And part it, giving half to him.

XXVI Still onward winds the dreary way;

I with it; for I long to prove No lapse of moons can  
canker Love,

Whatever fickle tongues may say.

**And if that eye which watches guilt**

And goodness, and hath power to see Within the  
green the moulder'd tree,

And towers fall'n as soon as built—

**Oh, if indeed that eye foresee**

Or see (in Him is no before) In more of life true life  
no more

And Love the indifference to be,

**Then might I find, ere yet the morn**

Breaks hither over Indian seas, That Shadow  
waiting with the keys,

To shroud me from my proper scorn.

XXVII I envy not in any moods

The captive void of noble rage, The linnet born  
within the cage,

That never knew the summer woods:

**I envy not the beast that takes**

His license in the field of time, Unfetter'd by the  
sense of crime,

To whom a conscience never wakes;

**Nor, what may count itself as blest,**

The heart that never plighted troth But stagnates in  
the weeds of sloth;

Nor any want-begotten rest.

**I hold it true, whate'er befall;**

I feel it, when I sorrow most; 'Tis better to have loved  
and lost

Than never to have loved at all.



















