

1923

december

NOV. 1923 Printed in U.S.A. 25c

“Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

DECORATION

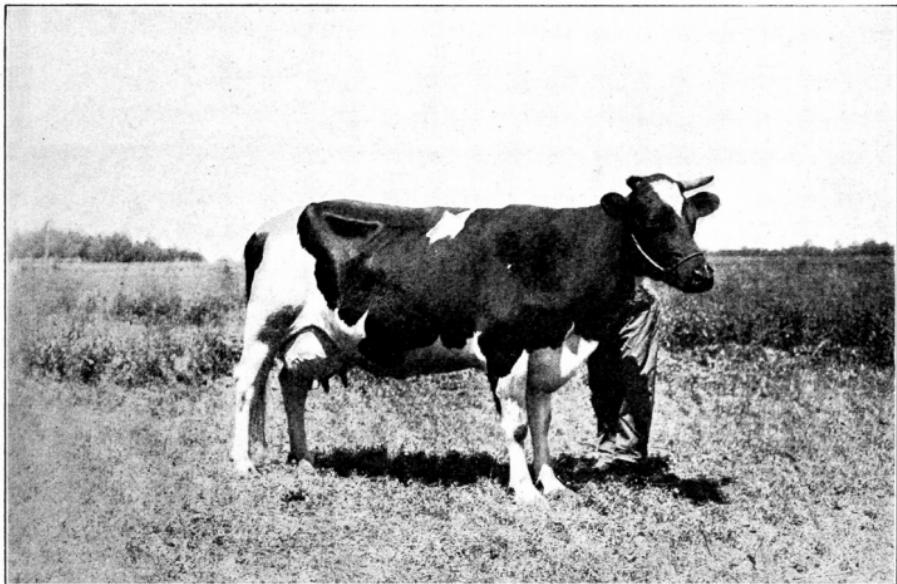
A MACAW preens upon a branch outspread
With jewelry of seed. He's deaf and mute.
The sky behind him splits like gorgeous fruit
And claw-like leaves clutch light till it has bled.
The raw diagonal bounty of his wings
Scrapes on the eye color too chafed. He beats
A flattered tail out against gauzy heats;
He has the frustrate look of cheated kings.
And all the simple evening passes by:
A gillyflower spans its little height
And lovers with their mouths press out their grief.
The bird fans wide his striped regality
Prismatic, while against a sky breath-white
A crystal tree lets fall a crystal leaf.

MEMORY

Do not guard this as rich stuff without mark
Closed in a cedar dark,
Nor lay it down with tragic masks and greaves,
Licked by the tongues of leaves.

Nor let it be as eggs under the wings
Of helpless, startled things,
Nor encompassed by song, nor any glory
Perverse and transitory.

Rather, like shards and straw upon coarse ground,
Of little worth when found,—
Rubble in gardens, it and stones alike,
That any spade may strike.



THE ROMANTIC

ADMIT the ruse to fix and name her chaste
With those who sleep the spring through, one and one,
Cool nights, when laurel builds up, without haste,
Its precise flower, like a pentagon.

In her obedient breast, all that ran free
You thought to bind, like echoes in a shell.
At the year's end, you promised, it would be
The unstrung leaves, and not her heart, that fell.

So the year broke and vanished on the screen
You cast about her; summer went to haws.
This, by your leave, is what she should have been,—
Another man will tell you what she was.

SUB CONTRA

NOTES on the tuned frame of strings
Plucked or silenced under the hand
Whimper lightly to the ear,
Delicate and involute,
Like the mockery in a shell.
Lest the brain forget the thunder
The roused heart once made it hear,—
Rising as that clamor fell,—
Let there sound from music's root
One note rage can understand,
A fine noise of riven things.
Build there some thick chord of wonder;
Then, for every passion's sake,
Beat upon it till it break.

PORTRAIT

SHE has no need to fear the fall
Of harvest from the laddered reach
Of orchards, nor the tide gone ebbing
From the steep beach.

Nor hold to pain's effrontery
Her body's bulwark, stern and savage,
Nor be a glass, where to forsee
Another's ravage.

What she has gathered, and what lost,
She will not find to lose again.
She is possessed by time, who once
Was loved by men.

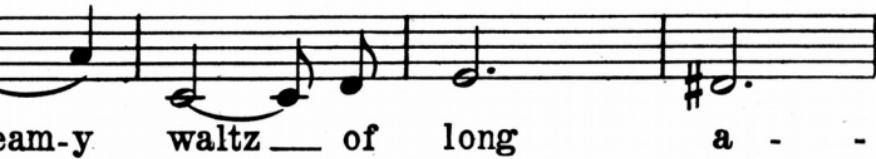
CHORUS

Musical score for the first system of the chorus. The vocal part (treble clef) starts with a dotted half note followed by a measure of two eighth notes. The piano part (treble and bass staves) consists of eighth-note chords. The bass staff has a bass clef and a bass drum symbol. A dynamic marking *mf-f* is placed under the piano treble staff.

I love__ to dance__ the dre

Musical score for the second system of the chorus. The vocal part begins with a dotted half note followed by a measure of two eighth notes. The piano part features eighth-note chords with various key changes indicated by sharps and flats. The bass staff has a bass clef and a bass drum symbol.

go _____ When grand _____ m



na - ma ____ and grand pa - pa ____ were

na - ma ____ and grand pa - pa ____ were

LAST HILL IN A VISTA

COME, let us tell the weeds in ditches
How we are poor, who once had riches,
And lie out in the sparse and sodden
Pastures that the cows have trodden,
The while an autumn night seals down
The comforts of the wooden town.

Come, let us counsel some cold stranger
How we sought safety, but loved danger.
So, with stiff walls about us, we
Chose this more fragile boundary:
Hills, where light poplars, the firm oak,
Loosen into a little smoke.

WOMEN

WOMEN have no wilderness in them,
They are provident instead,
Content in the tight hot cell of their hearts
To eat dusty bread.

They do not see cattle cropping red winter grass,
They do not hear
Snow water going down under culverts
Shallow and clear.

They wait, when they should turn to journeys,
They stiffen, when they should bend.
They use against themselves that benevolence
To which no man is friend.

They cannot think of so many crops to a field
Or of clean wood cleft by an axe.
Their love is an eager meaninglessness
Too tense, or too lax.

They hear in every whisper that speaks to them
A shout and a cry.
As like as not, when they take life over their door-sills
They should let it go by.

CHANSON UN PEU NAÏVE

What body can be ploughed,
Sown, and broken yearly?
She would not die, she vowed,
But she has, nearly.

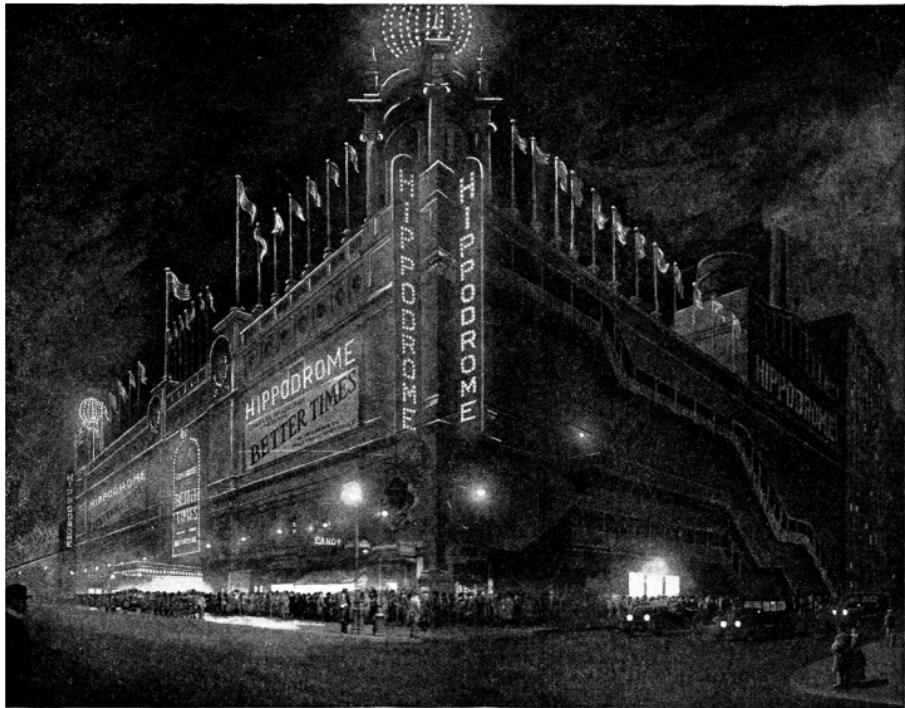
Sing, heart sing;
Call and carol clearly.

And, since she could not die,
Care would be a feather,
A film over the eye
Of two that lie together.

Fly, song, fly,
Break your little tether.

So from strength concealed
She makes her pretty boast:
Plain is a furrow healed
And she may love you most.

Cry, song, cry,
And hear your crying lost.



THE ALCHEMIST

I BURNED my life, that I might find
A passion wholly of the mind,
Thought divorced from eye and bone,
Ecstasy come to breath alone.
I broke my life, to seek relief
From the flawed light of love and grief.

With mounting beat the utter fire
Charred existence and desire.
It died low, ceased its sudden thresh.
I had found unmysterious flesh—
Not the mind's avid substance—still
Passionate beyond the will.

KNOWLEDGE

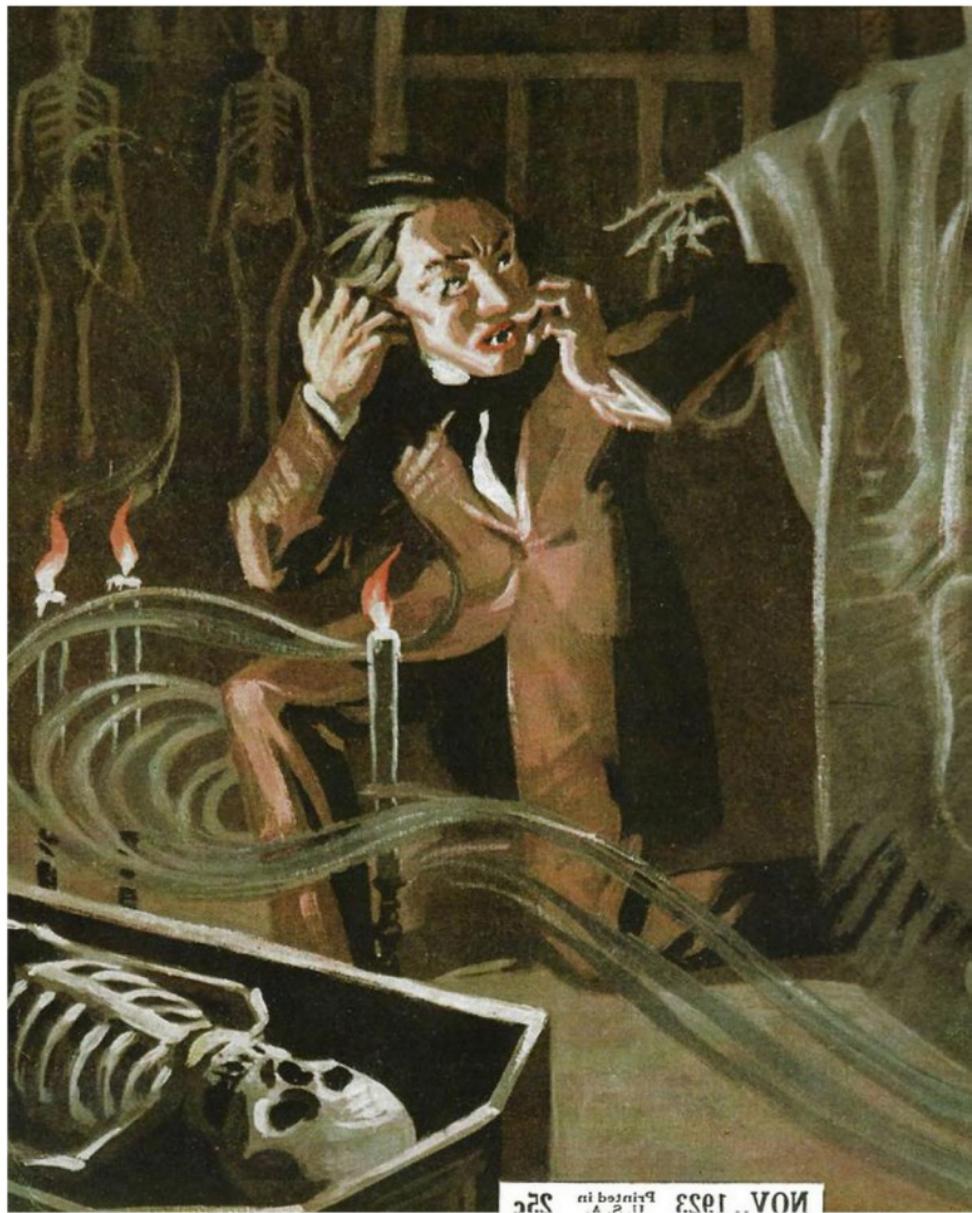
Now that I know
How passion warms little
Of flesh in the mould,
And treasure is brittle,—

I'll lie here and learn
How, over their ground,
Trees make a long shadow
And a light sound.

This issue consists primarily of poems by Louise Bogan, published in a 1923 collection titled “Body of this Death.” The poems presented here are excerpted, and not arranged in the order in which they originally appear. The cover image is a modified detail from *Weird Tales* magazine. Additional images are “from the archives.” Thank you for everything.

This zine was created in 2019 by Parker Higgins with the support of Kickstarter backers, and originally distributed on paper to 100 subscribers. To the extent possible, copyright and related rights in this work are waived under the terms of the Creative Commons Zero dedication.





NOV 1993 \$25
Illustrated by