

かあさんがえるは
 こがえるかかえる
 とうさんがえる
 いつかえる

○
 おならうた

いもくって ぶ
 くりくって ぽ
 すかして へ
 ごめんよ ば

おふろで ぽ
 こっそり す
 あわてて ぶ
 ふたりで ぴよ

私が生まれた時

世界は忙しい中を微笑んだ

私は直ちに幸せを知った

別に人に愛されたからでもない

私は只世界の中に生きるすばらしさに気づいたのだ

やがて死が私を古い秩序にくり入れる
それが帰ることなのだ……

心のスケッチ A

一本の線を書く

もう一本の線を書く

また一本の線を書く

そうしてまた……

一束の線に

いかなる記号も象徴も見ず

黙っている

それが髪になり

草になり

流星になり

水になるのを

楽しんで

ただ文字になることだけは

決して許さず

一碗の茶を

飲みながら

夕焼け

ときどき昔書いた詩を読み返してみることがある
 どんな気持ちで書いたのかなんて教科書みたいなことは考えない
 詩を書くときは詩を書きたいという気持ちしかないからだ
 たとえぼくは悲しいと書いてあっても
 そのときぼくが悲しかったわけじゃないのをぼくは知ってる

自分の詩を批評的に読むのはむずかしい
 忘れかけていたってそれは他人のものじゃない
 かと言ってまったく自分のものでもない
 どう責任をとればいいのか宙ぶらりんの妙な気持ちだ

知らず知らずのうちに自分の詩に感動してることがある

詩は人にひそむ抒情を煽る

ほとんど厚顔無恥と言っているほどに

「文学にとって最も重要な本来の目的のひとつは
 道徳的な問題を提起することだ」とソール・ペローは言ってるそうだが
 詩が無意識に目指す真理は小説とちがって
 連続した時間よりも瞬間に属しているんじゃないか

だが自分の詩を読み返しながら思うことがある
 こんなふうに書きちゃいけないと
 一日は夕焼けだけで成り立っているんじゃないから
 その前で立ちつくすだけでは生きていけないのだから
 それがどんなに美しかろうとも

Dead in her rage; but thou art wise enough,
 Tho' young, to love thy wiser, blunt the curse
 Of Pallas, bear, and tho' I speak the truth
 Believe I speak it, let thine own hand strike
 Thy youthful pulses into rest and quench
 The red God's anger, fearing not to plunge
 Thy torch of life in darkness, rather—thou
 Rejoicing that the sun, the moon, the stars
 Send no such light upon the ways of men
 As one great deed.

150

155

Thither, my son, and there
 Thou, that hast never known the embrace of love,
 Offer thy maiden life.

This useless hand!
 I felt one warm tear fall upon it. Gone!
 He will achieve his greatness.

160

But for me,
 I would that I were gather'd to my rest,
 And mingled with the famous kings of old,
 On whom about their ocean-islets flash
 The faces of the Gods—the wise man's word,
 Here trampled by the populace underfoot,
 There crown'd with worship—and these eyes will find
 The men I knew, and watch the chariot whirl
 About the goal again, and hunters race
 The shadowy lion, and the warrior-kings,
 In height and prowess more than human, strive
 Again for glory, while the golden lyre
 Is ever sounding in heroic ears
 Heroic hymns, and every way the vales
 Wind, clouded with the grateful incense-fume
 Of those who mix all odor to the Gods
 On one far height in one far-shining fire.⁵

165

170

175

"One height and one far-shining fire!"

And while I fancied that my friend
 For this brief idyll would require

180

A less diffuse and opulent end,
 And would defend his judgment well,
 If I should deem it over nice—

The tolling of his funeral bell

Broke on my Pagan Paradise,
 And mixt the dream of classic times,

185

And all the phantoms of the dream,
 With present grief, and made the rhymes,
 That miss'd his living welcome, seem

5. Tennyson liked to quote the above verse" (*Memoir*, II, 318).
 17 lines "as a sample of his blank

Like would-be guests an hour too late,
 Who down the highway moving on
 With easy laughter find the gate
 Is bolted, and the master gone.
 Gone into darkness, that full light
 Of friendship! past, in sleep, away
 By night, into the deeper night!⁶

190

195

The deeper night? A clearer day
 Than our poor twilight dawn on earth—
 If night, what barren toil to be!
 What life, so maim'd by night, were worth
 Our living out? Not mine to me
 Remembering all the golden hours
 Now silent, and so many dead,
 And him the last; and laying flowers,
 This wreath, above his honor'd head,
 And praying that, when I from hence
 Shall fade with him into the unknown,
 My close of earth's experience
 May prove as peaceful as his own.

200

205

1833 ff.; 1885

Break, Break, Break⁷

Break, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
 That he shouts with his sister at play!
 O, well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay!

5

And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill;
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
 And the sound of a voice⁸ that is still!

10

Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead
 Will never come back to me.

15

1834?; 1842

6. In a letter to Fanny Kemble fondly describing Tennyson's short visit in 1876, FitzGerald concluded, "I suppose I may never see him again" (*Memoir*, II, 317).

7. Although the lyric is a seascape,

Tennyson said it was "made in a Lincolnshire lane at 5 o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges" (*Memoir*, I, 190).

8. Arthur Hallam's.

Call me not so often back,
 Silent Voices of the dead,
 Toward the lowland ways behind me,
 And the sunlight that is gone!
 Call me rather, silent voices,
 Forward to the starry track
 Glimmering up the heights beyond me
 On, and always on!

1892

~~#312~~ Crossing the Bar¹

Sunset and evening star,
 And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
 Too full for sound and foam,
 When that which drew from out the boundless deep²
 Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark!
 And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne³ of Time and Place
 The flood may bear me far,
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face⁴
 When I have crost the bar.

1889

1. Written after a serious illness while crossing the Solent from Aldworth to Farringford on the Isle of Wight, the poem, Tennyson said, "came in a moment." In answer to the questions about the Pilot's presence, why he should remain on board when the ship reaches open sea or why the speaker only sees him then, Tennyson explained: "The Pilot has been on board all the while, but in the dark I have not seen him." He is, he said, "that Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us" (*Memoir* II, 367).
2. Nurse Durham, who had cared for the poet throughout his near fatal illness, "scolded him sharply for [grumbling], saying that instead of complaining he ought to write a hymn or something to show his gratitude for his marvelous recovery." In the jocular style bonding them and remembering her admonition, he said: "Will this do for you, old woman?" and recited the poem. "It seemed to her that he had written his own death song. Without a word, she turned and ran from the room" (*Alfred Tennyson*, pp. 511-15), perhaps as fine a critic as any on what Hallam Tennyson said: "That is one of the most beautiful poems ever written."

A few days before he died, Tennyson instructed his son to "put 'Crossing the Bar' at the end of all editions of my poems" — a request all editors have honored.

2. Compare *IM* "Epilogue," lines 122-24: "A soul shall draw from out the vast / And strike his being into bounds" and "De Profundis," line 25: "To that last deep where we and thou art still" and "The Passing of Arthur," line 445: "From the great deep to the great deep he goes."
3. See *Hamlet* III, i, lines 79-80: speaking of death, "from whose bourn / No traveller returns."
4. 1 Corinthians 13:12: "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."

CONTEXTS

From *Poems* (1832, dated 1833)

"My Life Is Full of Weary Days"¹

My life is full of weary days,
 But good things have not kept aloof,
 Nor wander'd into other ways;
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,
 Nor golden largess of thy praise 5

And now shake hands across the brink
 Of that deep grave to which I go,
 Shake hands once more; I cannot sink
 So far—far down, but I shall know
 Thy voice, and answer from below. 10

When in the darkness over me
 The four-handed mole shall scrape,
 Plant thou no dusky cypress-tree,
 Nor wreath thy cap with doleful crape,
 But pledge me in the flowing grape. 15

And when the sappy field and wood
 Grow green beneath the showery gray,
 And rugged barks begin to bud,
 And thro' damp holts new-flush'd with may,
 Ring sudden scritchings of the jay, 20

Then let wise Nature work her will,
 And on my clay her darnel grow;
 Come only, when the days are still,
 And at my headstone whisper low,
 And tell me if the woodbines blow. 25

1832 (1865, 1872)

1. In the 1832 volume printed with the heading "To ————" ("All good things have not kept aloof.") In the *Quarterly* for April 1833 Croker savagely derided this piece for its indulgence in the pathetic fallacy. Among numerous revisions, Tennyson changed "sudden scritchings of the jay" to "sudden scritchings of the jay."

The Lady of Shalott'

Part I

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;² 5
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow³
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten,⁴ aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot. 10
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses; and unhail'd
 The shallop⁵ flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:
 But who hath seen her wave her hand?
 Or at the casement seen her stand? 25
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot;
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott." 35

1. The 1842 version as printed here is significantly altered from the original, and comparison with the 1832 text reveals much about the poet's methods of revision. For the poem's source, Palgrave in his notes says it was suggested by "an Italian romance upon the Donna di Scalotta," confirming, as Tennyson said to his son, that he had not drawn on Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*: "I do not think that I had ever heard of the latter [Malory's Elaine] when I wrote the former." *Shallot* from the Italian *Scalotta* is the same as *Astolat*: the lady later becomes Elaine, "the lily maid of Astolat," in "Lancelot and Elaine" (1859).

2. The legendary city and site of Arthur's palace, variously located in Winchester, Somersetshire, and elsewhere. Unlike the kingdom of Celtic mythology, Camelot is placed by the sea in the Italian story.

FROM *POEMS* (1832, DATED 1833)

Part II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay

40

To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

45

And moving thro' a mirror⁶ clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot;
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

50

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad;⁷
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

55

60

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed:
"I am half sick of shadows,"⁸ said
The Lady of Shalott.

70

Part III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves⁹

75

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross¹ knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

80

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily,
As he rode down to Camelot;

85

And from his blazon'd baldric² slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

90

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot;

95

As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra,"³ by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

100

105

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

110

115

6. Ricks cites the influence of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* III, ii, on Britomart and Artegall: "The wondrous myrrhour, by which she in love with him did fall."

7. *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, *Miller's Tale*, 1000.

8. Not one of Lancelot's usual emblems, though Malory once gives him such a shield. Perhaps Tennyson

Part IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
 The pale yellow woods were waning,
 The broad stream in his banks complaining,
 Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot;
 Down she came and found a boat
 Beneath a willow left afloat,
 And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
 Like some bold seer in a trance,
 Seeing all his own mischance—
 With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
 And at the closing of the day
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
 The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
 That loosely flew to left and right—
 The leaves upon her falling light—
 Thro' the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot;
 And as the boat-head wound along
 The willowy hills and fields among,
 They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
 Till her blood was frozen slowly,
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
 Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide
 The first house by the water-side,
 Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
 By garden-wall and gallery,
 A gleaming shape she floated by,
 Dead-pale between the houses high,
 Silent into Camelot.
 Out upon the wharfs they came,
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame
 And round the prow⁴ they read her name,
*The Lady of Shalott.*⁵

4. The 1832 version read, "Below the stern." In *Tennyson and the Reviewers*, Edgar F. Shannon observes that J. W. Croker "had noted with derision that the name, *The Lady of Shalott*, was 'below the stern' of the boat."

5. Compare the stanza to "Lancelot and Elaine," lines 1236–74.

Who is this? and what is here?
 And in the lighted palace near
 Died the sound of royal cheer;
 And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
 But Lancelot mused a little space;
 He said, "She has a lovely face;
 God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."⁶

1832 (1842)

Mariana in the South¹

With one black shadow at its feet,
 The house thro' all the level shines,
 Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
 And silent in its dusty vines;
 A faint-blue ridge upon the right,
 An empty river-bed before,
 And shallows on a distant shore,
 In glaring sand and inlets bright.
 But "Ave Mary," made she moan,
 And "Ave Mary," night and morn,
 And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone,
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,
 From brow and bosom slowly down
 Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
 Her streaming curls of deepest brown
 To left and right, and made appear
 Still-lighted in a secret shrine
 Her melancholy eyes divine,
 The home of woe without a tear.
 And "Ave Mary," was her moan,
 "Madonna, sad is night and morn,"

6. The 1832 text ended with the following stanza, which undercuts the sympathetic outside world by making it a bunch of Philistines:

They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
 Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire and guest.
 There lay a parchment on her breast,
 That puzzled more than all the rest,
 The wellfed wits at Camelot;
 "The web was woven curiously
 The charm is broken utterly,
 Draw near and fear not—this is I,
 The Lady of Shalott."

1. Much revised and improved from the 1832 text, this poem, as Arthur Hallam explains in a letter to W. B. Donne (1831), was obviously intended "as a kind of pendant to his former poem of 'Mariana,' the idea of both being the expression of desolate loneliness" (*Memoir* I, 500). Conceived when "travelling between Narbonne and Perpignan" (*Memoir* I, 117), the second "Mariana" draws heavily on the scenery of southern France (see notes to "Enone," p. 48) just as the earlier "Mariana" reflected the Lincolnshire countryside.

The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
5 Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar!
10 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
15 Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Tears, Idle Tears

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
5 And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
10 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
15 So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
20 O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:
The firefly wakens: waken thou with me.

1850

1847

5 Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë² to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
10 A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

1847

From In Memoriam A. H. H.³

OBIT. MDCCCXXXIII

1
I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,⁴
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

5 But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
10 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,
15 "Behold the man that loved and lost,
But all he was is overworn."

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the under-lying dead,
Thy fibers net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

2. Daughter of a king of Argos in ancient Greece who, warned by an oracle that she would bear a son who would kill him, shut her up in a bronze chamber, where she was visited by Zeus in a shower of gold.

3. Arthur Henry Hallam (1811-1833) had been Tennyson's close friend at Cambridge; they had traveled together in France and Germany, and

Hallam had been engaged to the poet's sister. To his associates at Cambridge, Hallam had seemed to give the most brilliant promise of greatness. In the summer of 1833, when he had been traveling on the Continent with his father, Hallam died of a stroke at Vienna.

4. I.e., Goethe.

To take their leave, about the garden rails.

So I and some went out to these; we climb'd
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning saw
The happy valleys, half in light and half
Far-shadowing from the west, a land of peace;
Gray halls alone among their massive groves;
Trim hamlets, here and there a rustie tower
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths of wheat;
The shimmering glimpses of a stream; the seas;
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,
Imagined more than seen, the skirts of France.

'Look there, a garden!' said my college friend,
The Tory member's elder son, 'and there!
God bless the narrow sea which keeps her off,
And keeps our Britain, whole within herself,
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—
Some sense of duty, something of a faith,
Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,
Some patient force to change them when we will,
Some civic manhood firm against the crowd—
But yonder, whiff! there comes a sudden heat,
The gravest citizen seems to lose his head,
The king is scared, the soldier will not fight,
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,
A kingdom topples over with a shriek
Like an old woman, and down rolls the world
In mock heroics stranger than our own;
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most
No graver than a schoolboys' barring out;
Too comic for the solemn things they are,
Too solemn for the comic touches in them,
Like our wild Princess with as wise a dream
As some of theirs—God bless the narrow seas!
I wish they were a whole Atlantic broad.'

'Have patience,' I replied, 'ourselves are full
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest dreams
Are but the needful preludes of the truth.
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,
The sport half-science, fill me with a faith,
This fine old world of ours is but a child
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it time
To learn its limbs; there is a hand that guides.'

In such discourse we gain'd the garden rails,
And there we saw Sir Walter where he stood,
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,
Among six boys, head under head, and look'd
No little lily-handed baronet he,⁶

A great broad-shoulder'd genial Englishman,
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,⁷
A patron of some thirty charities,
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler none;
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy morn;
Now shaking hands with him, now him, of those
That stood the nearest—now address'd to speech—
Who spoke few words and pithy, such as closed
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for the year
To follow. A shout rose again, and made
The long line of the approaching rookery swerve
From the elms, and shook the branches of the deer
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns, and rang
Beyond the bourn of sunset—O, a shout
More joyful than the city-roar that hails
Premier or king! Why should not these great sirs
Give up their parks some dozen times a year
To let the people breathe? So thrice they cried,
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and sat on,
So much the gathering darkness charm'd; we sat
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,
Perchance upon the future man. The walls
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and owls whoop'd,
And gradually the powers of the night,
That range above the region of the wind,
Deepening the courts of twilight broke them up
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,
Beyond all thought into the heaven of heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir Ralph
From those rich silks, and home well-pleased we went.

1847; 1849–51

1847

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

Arthur Henry Hallam died suddenly and unexpectedly from a cerebral hemorrhage on September 15, 1833, while on a visit to Vienna with his father. Some five years earlier, shortly after his arrival at Trinity College in October, 1828, Hallam had befriended Tennyson. "Alfred was already a prominent figure in the College by that time and Hallam's passion for poetry must almost certainly have brought the two together before long" (*Alfred Tennyson*, p. 66). Thereafter, the two remained inseparable.

6. "An imaginary character" (Tennyson).

7. "Pine-apple" (Tennyson).

able. During the last couple of decades, an extraordinary amount of attention has been devoted to speculations about a homosexual dimension to their friendship. It should always be recalled that, throughout the nineteenth century, friendships between young men would be viewed by twentieth-century standards as exceptionally close. A rigorously imposed etiquette, particularly in regard to prolonged separation of the sexes, was the most important cause. High points in their relationship included the trip to the Pyrenees in 1830 (see n. 1, p. 48) and a tour of the Rhineland in 1832.

At Cambridge, Hallam was considered by all who knew him to be the most promising figure of his generation, a statement substantiated by numerous reminiscences. As titular leader of the Apostles, the Cambridge undergraduate literary group, he introduced Tennyson to that society and its stimulating atmosphere. Hallam's influence was profound. It was Hallam who helped Tennyson through the difficult period following publication of *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* in 1830 and who worked over the new volume for 1832. Hostile reviewers—the two most vicious were Wilson and Croker (who had earlier savaged Keats)—stung hard and stung deep. (See excerpts from both in the "Contexts" section of this book.) Hallam's role in meliorating their otherwise negative effects simply cannot be overrated, both at the time and for the future's sake. He was friend, critic, and philosopher to a sometimes confused and lonely poet who desperately needed the guidance, warmth, and compassion that Hallam freely offered. (See also Hallam's essay on p. 581.) Hallam's engagement to Tennyson's sister Emily had been "recognized" in 1833. As he was shortly to become a member of the family, his loss was shattering.

The Hallam family learned of his death on September 28; Hallam's uncle posted Tennyson the news on October 1, although Tennyson probably did not receive it until several days later. The composition of elegy 9, on October 6, remains the best guess at the inception of *In Memoriam*, the lyrics that would eventually be assembled into his greatest work (see *Memoir* I, 107). As he said much later, "The sections were written at many different places, and as the phases of our intercourse came to my memory and suggested them. I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole or for publication, until I found I had written so many" (*Memoir* I, 304).

Through internal evidence, the composition of several sections can be dated rather precisely; others by the poet's specific remarks. The majority of the elegies were written before 1842. And by 1849, with the composition of "The Prologue," the lyrics had been arranged for publication. One should not, therefore, expect a tightly knit structure. Rather, the poem is loosely organized around the three Christmas sections: 28, 78, and 104. What other unity is present largely results from recurrent themes, symbols, images, and atmosphere. For "the way of the soul," as the poet first subtitled his work, properly—humanly—moves from doubt to tentative assertions of faith in an irregular fashion. Unlike Wordsworth in his *Prelude*, Tennyson had not set out to program the growth of a poet's mind, building from "least suggestions" to some monumental moments of profound insight. This is a point that should—must—be taken into account by those who would fault the work for its lack of structure. The movement among the elegies is, frequently and figuratively, two steps forward to three steps backward. "It is not religious because of the quality of its faith," to quote Eliot's memorable sentence, "but because of the quality of its doubt." On the subject of our individual immortality, it has been said that no other single poem has opened—and closed—so many doors. Although disputed by his son, Tennyson reportedly told Knowles: "It's too hopeful, this poem, more than I am myself." For a poet who met the Furies on their own dark grounds, Tennyson could be all but paralyzingly tentative (see section 95) in dread of uttering unqualified dogma or even validating his own mystical experience.

In Memoriam is best read as a whole, preferably at one sitting. Perhaps only then does the modern reader have a chance of grasping—possibly even feeling—the magnitude of the issue. In 1850 the "night of fear" had descended. Theories of evolution were very much in the air. Sir Charles Lyell's famous *Principles of Geology* (1830–33) had made it extremely difficult for any self-respecting intelligence to take the biblical version of the Creation literally. At issue was the immortality of the soul, given special and immediate poignancy by Hallam's death. If that issue no longer moves us as deeply as it did Tennyson and his contemporaries, we nonetheless owe this great poem a willing suspension of our disbelief. As in our reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, we believe in a belief—or here, perhaps more accurately, in the expression of doubt.

In Memoriam A. H. H.

Obit MDCCCXXXIII

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,¹
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;²

Thine are these orbs³ of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot⁴
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:⁵
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 systems⁶ have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;

1. Probably influenced by George Herbert's poem "Love," which begins:

Immortal Love, Author of this great frame,
Sprung from that beauty which can never fade,
How hath Man parcell'd out Thy glorious name,
And thrown it on the dust which Thou hast made . . .

"This might be taken in a St. John sense" (Tennyson). Hallam Tennyson alludes to 1 John 4–5. On the meter of the IM stanza, Tennyson commented: "I believed myself the originator of the metre, until after 'In Memoriam' came out, when some one told me that Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney had used it" (*Memoir* I, 306).

2. See John 20:29, where Jesus speaks of His resurrection to the doubting Thomas: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Of Christ, see also 1 Peter 1:8: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing."

3. "The sun and moon" (Tennyson).

4. Possibly suggested by Revelation 10:2, a chapter Tennyson particularly admired and often quoted. An angel appeared "and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth."

5. Psalm 16:10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell."

6. Of philosophy and theology.

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,⁷

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 worlds⁸ 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 wasted⁹ youth;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1

I held it truth, with him¹ who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,²
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 interest³ of tears?

7. "As in the ages of faith" (Tennyson). Before the split between faith and knowledge that the "new science" was rapidly widening. Compare Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" for a similar expression in a different metaphor: "The Sea of Faith / Was once, too, at the full."

8. Tennyson often implied that he believed in a number of inhabited planets.

9. Desolated. Bradley remarks, "surely, not 'squandered,'" but see line 2 in "Remorse."

1. Goethe, according to Tennyson (see *Memoir* II, 391), but the reference never has been located.

2. "Goethe is consummate in so many different styles" (Tennyson).

3. "The good that grows for us out of grief" (Tennyson). The use of economic terms in religious context also suggests the influence of George Herbert. Of Ricks's three possible reminiscences of Shakespeare,

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,⁴

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."

2

Old yew,⁵ which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,⁶
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 clock⁷
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,⁸

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for⁹ thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

3

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 woven across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun;¹

see *Sonnet* 31, lines 5-7: "How many a holy and obsequious tear / Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye, / As interest of the dead."

4. "Yet it is better to bear the wild misery of extreme grief than that Time should obliterate the sense of loss and deaden the power of love" (Hallam Tennyson).

5. Hallam was buried January 3, 1834, at Clevedon Church, Somersetshire, overlooking the Bristol Channel. The scene of this section is, however, probably a composite picture in part suggested by the graveyard at Somersby where Tennyson's father was buried. See "The Two Voices," lines 271ff, "darkness in the village yew." "I myself did not see Clevedon till years after the burial" (*Memoir* I, 305).

6. Tennyson compares the *Odyssey* X line 521: "The powerless heads of the dead."

7. In the church tower behind the yew.

8. "No autumn tints ever change the green gloom of the yew" (Hallam Tennyson).

9. In envy of.

1. An allusion to the nebular hypothesis.

"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."²

And shall I take a thing so blind,
Embrace her³ as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,⁴
Upon the threshold of the mind?

4

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail⁵ 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!⁶

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."

5

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.⁷

2. Sorrow's words reflect Tennyson's growing concern with the mechanistic theory of the universe, which held that all life works out its predestined course according to natural laws over which neither God nor man has any control.
3. Sorrow.
4. "Compare *Othello*, I, iii, 123: 'I do confess the vices of my blood'" (Ricks).
5. Lose the capacity for desiring.
6. "Water can be brought below freezing-point and not turn into ice—if it be kept still; but if it be moved suddenly it turns into ice and may break the vase" (Tennyson).
7. "Compare Keats's 'Ode to a Nightingale,' lines 1–3: 'a drowsy numbness pains / My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk, / Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains'" (Shatto and Shaw).

In words, like weeds,⁸ I'll wrap me o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
But the large grief which these enfold
Is given in outline and no more.

6

One writes, that "other friends remain,"
That "loss is common to the race"⁹ —
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.¹

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 hour² 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 ranging³ 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;

8. Garments, strongly implying "widow's weeds" in mourning (*OED*, 5, 2). Contrast section 38. From his initial feeling that writing is merely an antidote for despair, the poet later moves toward a more positive conception of his art.
9. "See *Numbers*, 16:29 'If these men die the common death of all men'" (Shatto and Shaw).
1. "Of these two stanzas, Tennyson compares Lucretius, II, 578–80. 'No night ever followed day, or dawn followed night, but has heard mingled with their sickly wailings the lamentations that attend upon death and the black funeral.' Also compare *Hamlet*, I, ii, 72: 'Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die'" (Ricks).
2. "My father was writing to Arthur Hallam in the hour that he died" (Hallam Tennyson).
3. Arranging. This section was probably written sometime between summer 1840 and Christmas 1841. See *Memoir* I, 201–02.

MEMORIAM A. H. H.
And thinking "this will please him best,"
She takes a riband or a rose,⁴

For he will see them on to-night;
And with the thought her color 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.

7

Dark house,⁵ 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 thing⁶ 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.

8

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,

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.
And all the place is dark, and all
The chambers emptied of delight:⁷

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.

9

Fair ship,⁸ that from the Italian shore
Saiest the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's⁹ loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain; a favorable 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,¹ 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;

4. "We were waiting for her," writes one of her [Emily Tennyson's] friends, "in the drawing room the first day since her loss that she had been able to meet anyone, and she came at last, dressed in deep mourning, a shadow of her former self, but with one white rose in her black hair as her Arthur loved to see her" (*Memoir* I, 108–09).

5. Hallam's home at 67 Wimpole Street, London. See section 119.

6. Tennyson was thinking of Horatio's description of Hamlet's father's ghost in *Hamlet* I, i, line 148: "And then it started like a guilty thing." Ricks cites Wordsworth's *Immortality Ode* lines 148–51: "Blank misgivings of a Creature / Moving about in worlds not realised, / High instincts before which our mortal Nature / Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

7. "Compare Keats's *Lamia*, II, 307: 'and Lycius' arms were empty of delight'" (Bradley).

8. Sections 9–17 form a group all concerned with the return of Hallam's body. They are probably among the first written of the elegies, mostly composed, one assumes, before the end of the year. Tennyson told Knowles that elegy 9 was "the first written" (see also the headnote). On December 31, 1833, Tennyson received a letter from Hallam's father saying his son's body had arrived.

9. "The first mention of the deceased by name. It appears twice in this section and twice more in the poem: 80, [line] 2; 89, [line] 6" (Shatto and Shaw).

1. The morning star, Venus.

To whom each moment in its race,
Crowd as we will its neutral space,
Is but a quiet watershed
Whence, equally, the seas of life and death are fed.

Enough, we live! — and if a life,
With large results so little rife,
Though bearable, seem hardly worth
This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth;
Yet, Fausta, the mute turf we tread,
The solemn hills around us spread;
This stream which falls incessantly,
The strange-scrawl'd rocks, the lonely sky,
If I might lend their life a voice,
Seem to bear rather than rejoice.
And even could the intemperate prayer
Man iterates, while these forbear,
For movement, for an ampler sphere,
Pierce Fate's impenetrable ear;
Not milder is the general lot
Because our spirits have forgot,
In action's dizzying eddy whirl'd,
The something that infects the world.

155

Dover Beach

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; — on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,

Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

156

Lines Written in Kensington Gardens

In this lone, open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-trees stand!

Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
 Rising all round, overawe;
 Factions divide them, their host
 Threatens to break, to dissolve.
 – Ah, keep, keep them combined!
 Else, of the myriads who fill
 That army, not one shall arrive;
 Sole they shall stray; in the rocks
 Stagger for ever in vain,
 Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
 Of your fainting, dispirited race,
 Ye, like angels, appear,
 Radiant with ardour divine!
 Beacons of hope, ye appear!
 Languor is not in your heart,
 Weakness is not in your word,
 Weariness not on your brow.
 Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
 Panic, despair, flee away.
 Ye move through the ranks, recall
 The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
 Praise, re-inspire the brave!
 Order, courage, return.
 Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
 Follow your steps as ye go.
 Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
 Strengthen the wavering line,
 Stablish, continue our march,
 On, to the bound of the waste,
 On, to the City of God.

Growing Old

What is it to grow old?
 Is it to lose the glory of the form,
 The lustre of the eye?
 Is it for beauty to forgo her wreath?
 – Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength –
 Not our bloom only, but our strength – decay?
 Is it to feel each limb
 Grow stiffer, every function less exact,
 Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not
 Ah, 'tis not what in youth we dream'd 'twould be!
 'Tis not to have our life
 Mellow'd and soften'd as with sunset-glow,
 A golden day's decline.

'Tis not to see the world
 As from a height, with rapt prophetic eyes,
 And heart profoundly stirr'd;
 And weep, and feel the fulness of the past,
 The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days
 And not once feel that we were ever young;
 It is to add, immured
 In the hot prison of the present, month
 To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,
 And feel but half, and feebly, what we feel.
 Deep in our hidden heart
 Festers the dull remembrance of a change,
 But no emotion – none.

It is – last stage of all –
 When we are frozen up within, and quite
 The phantom of ourselves,
 To hear the world applaud the hollow ghost
 Which blamed the living man.

ROBERT LEIGHTON

1822–69

161

The Bunch of Larks

Portly he was, in carriage somewhat grand;
 Of gentleman he wore the accepted marks:
 He thrid the busy street, and in his hand
 He bore a bunch of larks!

There be some things that *may* be carried – yes,
 A gentleman may carry larks – if dead;
 Or any slaughter'd game; not fish, still less
 The homely beef or bread.

I met him in the street, and turn'd about,
 And mused long after he had flaunted by.
 A bunch of larks! and his intent, no doubt,
 To have them in a pie.

Yes, four-and-twenty larks baked in a pie!
 O, what a feast of melody is there!
 The ringing chorus of a summer sky!
 A dish of warbling air!

How many dusty wanderers of the earth
 Have those still'd voices lifted from the dust!
 And now to end their almost Heavenly mirth
 Beneath a gourmand's crust!

But as he picks their thin ambrosial throats,
 Will no accusing memories arise,
 Of grassy glebes, and heaven-descending notes,
 And soul-engulfing skies?

The Bible says the age o' man
 Threescore an' ten perchance may be;
 She's ninety-four; – let them wha can
 Explain the incongruity.
 She should hae lived afore the Flood –
 She's come o' Patriarchal blood –
 She's some auld Pagan, mummified
 Alive for her annuity.

She's been embalmed inside and out –
 She's sauted to the last degree –
 There's pickle in her very snout
 Sae caper-like an' cruety;
 Lot's wife was fresh compared to her;
 They've Kayanized the useless knir –
 She canna decompose – nae mair
 Than her accursed annuity.

The water-drap wears out the rock
 As this eternal jaud wears me;
 I could withstand the single shock,
 But no the continuity.
 It's pay me here – an' pay me there –
 An' pay me, pay me, evermair;
 I'll gang demented wi' despair –
 I'm *charged* for her annuity!

*salted**preserved the
useless witch**jade*

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

1806–61

17

59

Sonnets from the Portuguese

I

I thought once how Theocritus had sung
 Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
 Who each one in a gracious hand appears
 To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
 And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
 I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
 The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
 Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
 A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
 So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
 Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
 And a voice said in mastery, while I strove, –
 'Guess now who holds thee?' – 'Death,' I said. But, there,
 The silver answer rang, – 'Not Death, but Love.'

II

But only three in all God's universe
 Have heard this word thou hast said, – Himself, beside
 Thee speaking, and me listening! and replied
 One of us . . . *that* was God, . . . and laid the curse
 So darkly on my eyelids, as to amerce
 My sight from seeing thee, – that if I had died,
 The deathweights, placed there, would have signified
 Less absolute exclusion. 'Nay' is worse
 From God than from all others, O my friend!
 Men could not part us with their worldly jars,
 Nor the seas change us, nor the tempests bend;
 Our hands would touch for all the mountain-bars:
 And, heaven being rolled between us at the end,
 We should but vow the faster for the stars.

III

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
 Unlike our uses and our destinies.
 Our ministering two angels look surprise
 On one another, as they strike athwart
 Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
 A guest for queens to social pageantries,
 With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
 Than tears even can make mine, to play thy part
 Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
 With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
 A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
 The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
 The chrism is on thine head, – on mine, the dew, –
 And Death must dig the level where these agree.

IV

Thou hast thy calling to some palace-floor,
 Most gracious singer of high poems! where
 The dancers will break footing, from the care
 Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
 And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
 For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
 To let thy music drop here unaware
 In folds of golden fulness at my door?
 Look up and see the casement broken in,
 The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
 My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
 Hush, call no echo up in further proof
 Of desolation! there's a voice within
 That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . . alone, aloof.

V

I lift my heavy heart up solemnly,
 As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
 And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn
 The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
 What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,
 And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn
 Through the ashen greyness. If thy foot in scorn
 Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
 It might be well perhaps. But if instead
 Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow
 The grey dust up, . . . those laurels on thine head,
 O my Belovèd, will not shield thee so,
 That none of all the fires shall scorch and shred
 The hair beneath. Stand farther off then! go.

SEBASTIAN EVANS

1830-1909

194

What the Trumpeter Said

1855

At a pot-house bar as I chanced to pass
I saw three men by the flare of the gas:
Soldiers two, with their red-coats gay,
And the third from Chelsea, a pensioner grey,
With three smart hussies as bold as they.
Drunk and swearing and swaggering all,
With their foul songs scaring the quiet Mall,
While the clash of glasses and clink of spurs
Kept time to the roystering quiristers,
And the old man sat and stamped with his stump:
When I heard a trumpeter trumpet a trump: –
'To the wars! – To the wars!
'March, march!
'Quit your petty little tittle-tattle,
'Quit the bottle for the battle,
'And march!
'To the wars, to the wars!
'March, march with a tramp!
'To the wars!
'Up, you toper at your tippie, bottle after bottle at the tap!
'Quit your pretty dirty Betty! Clap her garter in your cap,
'And march!
'To the trench and the sap!
'To the little victual of the camp!
'To the little liquor of the camp!
'To the breach and the storm!
'To the roaring and the glory of the wars!
'To the rattle and the battle and the scars!
Trumpeter, trumpet it out!

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

1830-94

195

Goblin Market

Morning and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry:
'Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries; –
All ripe together
In summer weather, –
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy.'

19

Evening by evening
 Among the brookside rushes,
 Laura bowed her head to hear,
 Lizzie veiled her blushes:
 Crouching close together
 In the cooling weather,
 With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
 With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
 'Lie close,' Laura said,
 Pricking up her golden head:
 'We must not look at goblin men,
 We must not buy their fruits:
 Who knows upon what soil they fed
 Their hungry thirsty roots?'
 'Come buy,' call the goblins
 Hobbling down the glen.
 'Oh,' cried Lizzie, 'Laura, Laura,
 You should not peep at goblin men.'
 Lizzie covered up her eyes,
 Covered close lest they should look;
 Laura reared her glossy head,
 And whispered like the restless brook:
 'Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
 Down the glen tramp little men.
 One hauls a basket,
 One bears a plate,
 One lugs a golden dish
 Of many pounds' weight.
 How fair the vine must grow
 Whose grapes are so luscious;
 How warm the wind must blow
 Through those fruit bushes.'
 'No,' said Lizzie: 'No, no, no;
 Their offers should not charm us,
 Their evil gifts would harm us.'
 She thrust a dimpled finger
 In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
 Curious Laura chose to linger
 Wondering at each merchant man.

One had a cat's face,
 One whisked a tail,
 One tramped at a rat's pace,
 One crawled like a snail,
 One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
 One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
 She heard a voice like voice of doves
 Cooing all together:
 They sounded kind and full of loves
 In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
 Like a rush-imbedded swan,
 Like a lily from the beck,
 Like a moonlit poplar branch,
 Like a vessel at the launch
 When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
 Turned and trooped the goblin men,
 With their shrill repeated cry,
 'Come buy, come buy.'
 When they reached where Laura was
 They stood stock still upon the moss,
 Leering at each other,
 Brother with queer brother;
 Signalling each other,
 Brother with sly brother.
 One set his basket down,
 One reared his plate;
 One began to weave a crown
 Of tendrils, leaves and rough nuts brown
 (Men sell not such in any town);
 One heaved the golden weight
 Of dish and fruit to offer her:
 'Come buy, come buy,' was still their cry.
 Laura stared but did not stir,

Longed but had no money:
 The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
 In tones as smooth as honey,
 The cat-faced purr'd,
 The rat-paced spoke a word
 Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
 One parrot-voiced and jolly
 Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty Polly'; –
 One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
 'Good Folk, I have no coin;
 To take were to purloin:
 I have no copper in my purse,
 I have no silver either,
 And all my gold is on the furze
 That shakes in windy weather
 Above the rusty heather.'
 'You have much gold upon your head,'
 They answered all together:
 'Buy from us with a golden curl.'
 She clipped a precious golden lock,
 She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
 Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
 Sweeter than honey from the rock,
 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
 Clearer than water flowed that juice;
 She never tasted such before,
 How should it cloy with length of use?
 She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
 Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
 She sucked until her lips were sore;
 Then flung the emptied rinds away
 But gathered up one kernel-stone,
 And knew not was it night or day
 As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate
 Full of wise upbraidings:
 'Dear, you should not stay so late,
 Twilight is not good for maidens;
 Should not loiter in the glen
 In the haunts of goblin men.
 Do you not remember Jeanie,
 How she met them in the moonlight,
 Took their gifts both choice and many,
 Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
 Plucked from bowers
 Where summer ripens at all hours?
 But ever in the noonlight
 She pined and pined away;
 Sought them by night and day,
 Found them no more but dwindled and grew grey;
 Then fell with the first snow,
 While to this day no grass will grow
 Where she lies low:
 I planted daisies there a year ago
 That never blow.
 You should not loiter so.'
 'Nay, hush,' said Laura:
 'Nay, hush, my sister:
 I ate and ate my fill,
 Yet my mouth waters still;
 To-morrow night I will
 Buy more:' and kissed her:
 'Have done with sorrow;
 I'll bring you plums tomorrow
 Fresh on their mother twigs,
 Cherries worth getting;
 You cannot think what figs
 My teeth have met in,
 What melons icy-cold
 Piled on a dish of gold
 Too huge for me to hold,

What peaches with a velvet nap,
 Pellucid grapes without one seed:
 Odorous indeed must be the mead
 Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
 With lilies at the brink,
 And sugar-sweet their sap.'

Golden head by golden head,
 Like two pigeons in one nest
 Folded in each other's wings,
 They lay down in their curtained bed:
 Like two blossoms on one stem,
 Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
 Like two wands of ivory
 Tipped with gold for awful kings.
 Moon and stars gazed in at them,
 Wind sang to them lullaby,
 Lumbering owls forbore to fly,
 Not a bat flapped to and fro
 Round their rest:
 Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
 Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
 When the first cock crowed his warning,
 Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
 Laura rose with Lizzie:
 Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
 Aired and set to rights the house,
 Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
 Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
 Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
 Fed their poultry, sat and sewed;
 Talked as modest maidens should:
 Lizzie with an open heart,
 Laura in an absent dream,
 One content, one sick in part;
 One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,
 One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came:
 They went with pitchers to the reedy brook;
 Lizzie most placid in her look,
 Laura most like a leaping flame.
 They drew the gurgling water from its deep.
 Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
 Then turning homeward said: 'The sunset flushes
 Those furthest loftiest crags;
 Come, Laura, not another maiden lags,
 No wilful squirrel wags,
 The beasts and birds are fast asleep.'
 But Laura loitered still among the rushes
 And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,
 The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill;
 Listening ever, but not catching
 The customary cry,
 'Come buy, come buy,'
 With its iterated jingle
 Of sugar-baited words:
 Nor for all her watching
 Once discerning even one goblin
 Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling –
 Let alone the herds
 That used to tramp along the glen,
 In groups or single,
 Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, 'O Laura, come;
 I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not look:
 You should not loiter longer at this brook:
 Come with me home.
 The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
 Each glowworm winks her spark,
 Let us get home before the night grows dark:

For clouds may gather
 Though this is summer weather,
 Put out the lights and drench us through;
 Then if we lost our way what should we do?

Laura turned cold as stone
 To find her sister heard that cry alone,
 That goblin cry,
 'Come buy our fruits, come buy.'
 Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit?
 Must she no more such succous pasture find,
 Gone deaf and blind?
 Her tree of life drooped from the root:
 She said not one word in her heart's sore ache:
 But peering thro' the dimness, nought discerning,
 Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way;
 So crept to bed, and lay
 Silent till Lizzie slept;
 Then sat up in a passionate yearning.
 And gnashed her teeth for baulked desire, and wept
 As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
 Laura kept watch in vain
 In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
 She never caught again the goblin cry,
 'Come buy, come buy;' –
 She never spied the goblin men
 Hawking their fruits along the glen:
 But when the noon waxed bright
 Her hair grew thin and grey;
 She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
 To swift decay and burn
 Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-stone
 She set it by a wall that faced the south;
 Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
 Watched for a waxing shoot,

But there came none.
 It never saw the sun,
 It never felt the trickling moisture run:
 While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
 She dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees
 False waves in desert drouth
 With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
 And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.

She no more swept the house,
 Tended the fowls or cows,
 Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
 Brought water from the brook:
 But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
 And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear
 To watch her sister's cankerous care
 Yet not to share.
 She night and morning
 Caught the goblins' cry:
 'Come buy our orchard fruits,
 Come buy, come buy:' –
 Beside the brook, along the glen,
 She heard the tramp of goblin men,
 The voice and stir
 Poor Laura could not hear;
 Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
 But feared to pay too dear.
 She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
 Who should have been a bride;
 But who for joys brides hope to have
 Fell sick and died
 In her gay prime,
 In earliest winter time,
 With the first glazing rime,
 With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.

Till Laura dwindling
 Seemed knocking at Death's door.
 Then Lizzie weighed no more
 Better and worse;
 But put a silver penny in her purse,
 Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
 At twilight, halted by the brook:
 And for the first time in her life
 Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
 When they spied her peeping:
 Came towards her hobbling,
 Flying, running, leaping,
 Puffing and blowing,
 Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
 Clucking and gobbling,
 Mopping and mowing,
 Full of airs and graces,
 Pulling wry faces,
 Demure grimaces,
 Cat-like and rat-like,
 Ratel- and wombat-like,
 Snail-paced in a hurry,
 Parrot-voiced and whistler,
 Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
 Chattering like magpies,
 Fluttering like pigeons,
 Gliding like fishes, –
 Hugged her and kissed her:
 Squeezed and caressed her:
 Stretched up their dishes,
 Panniers, and plates:
 'Look at our apples
 Russet and dun,
 Bob at our cherries,
 Bite at our peaches,
 Citrons and dates,

Grapes for the asking,
 Pears red with basking
 Out in the sun,
 Plums on their twigs;
 Pluck them and suck them,
 Pomegranates, figs.'

'Good folk,' said Lizzie,
 Mindful of Jeanie:
 'Give me much and many:'
 Held out her apron,
 Tossed them her penny.
 'Nay, take a seat with us,
 Honour and eat with us,'
 They answered grinning:
 'Our feast is but beginning.
 Night yet is early,
 Warm and dew-pearly,
 Wakeful and starry:
 Such fruits as these
 No man can carry;
 Half their bloom would fly,
 Half their dew would dry,
 Half their flavour would pass by.
 Sit down and feast with us,
 Be welcome guest with us,
 Cheer you and rest with us.' –
 'Thank you,' said Lizzie: 'But one waits
 At home alone for me:
 So without further parleying,
 If you will not sell me any
 Of your fruits though much and many,
 Give me back my silver penny
 I tossed you for a fee.' –
 They began to scratch their pates,
 No longer wagging, purring,
 But visibly demurring,
 Grunting and snarling.

One called her proud,
 Cross-grained, uncivil;
 Their tones waxed loud,
 Their looks were evil.
 Lashing their tails
 They trod and hustled her,
 Elbowed and jostled her,
 Clawed with their nails,
 Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking,
 Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
 Twitched her hair out by the roots,
 Stamped upon her tender feet,
 Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
 Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
 Like a lily in a flood, –
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone
 Lashed by tides obstreperously, –
 Like a beacon left alone
 In a hoary roaring sea,
 Sending up a golden fire, –
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
 White with blossoms honey-sweet
 Sore beset by wasp and bee, –
 Like a royal virgin town
 Topped with gilded dome and spire
 Close beleaguered by a fleet
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
 Twenty cannot make him drink.
 Though the goblins cuffed and caught her,
 Coaxed and fought her,
 Bullied and besought her,
 Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
 Kicked and knocked her,
 Mauled and mocked her,

Lizzie uttered not a word;
 Would not open lip from lip
 Lest they should cram a mouthful in:
 But laughed in heart to feel the drip
 Of juice that syruped all her face,
 And lodged in dimples of her chin,
 And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
 At last the evil people
 Worn out by her resistance
 Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
 Along whichever road they took,
 Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
 Some writhed into the ground,
 Some dived into the brook
 With ring and ripple,
 Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
 Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
 Lizzie went her way;
 Knew not was it night or day;
 Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,
 Threaded copse and dingle,
 And heard her penny jingle
 Bouncing in her purse, –
 Its bounce was music to her ear.
 She ran and ran
 As if she feared some goblin man
 Dogged her with gibe or curse
 Or something worse:
 But not one goblin scurried after,
 Nor was she pricked by fear;
 The kind heart made her windy-paced
 That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
 And inward laughter.

She cried 'Laura,' up the garden,
 'Did you miss me?
 Come and kiss me.

Never mind my bruises,
 Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
 Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
 Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
 Eat me, drink me, love me;
 Laura, make much of me;
 For your sake I have braved the glen
 And had to do with goblin merchant men.'

Laura started from her chair,
 Flung her arms up in the air,
 Clutched her hair:
 'Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
 For my sake the fruit forbidden?
 Must your light like mine be hidden,
 Your young life like mine be wasted,
 Undone in mine undoing
 And ruined in my ruin,
 Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?' –
 She clung about her sister,
 Kissed and kissed and kissed her:
 Tears once again
 Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
 Dropping like rain
 After long sultry drouth;
 Shaking with agonish fear, and pain,
 She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
 That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
 She loathed the feast:
 Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
 Rent all her robe, and wrung
 Her hands in lamentable haste,
 And beat her breast.
 Her locks streamed like the torch
 Borne by a racer at full speed,
 Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
 Or like an eagle when she stems the light

Straight toward the sun,
 Or like a caged thing freed,
 Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her
 heart,
 Met the fire smouldering there
 And overbore its lesser flame;
 She gorged on bitterness without a name:
 Ah fool, to choose such part
 Of soul-consuming care!
 Sense failed in the mortal strife:
 Like the watch-tower of a town
 Which an earthquake shatters down,
 Like a lightning-stricken mast,
 Like a wind-uprooted tree
 Spun about,
 Like a foam-topped waterspout
 Cast down headlong in the sea,
 She fell at last;
 Pleasure past and anguish past,
 Is it death or is it life?

Life out of death.
 That night long Lizzie watched by her,
 Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
 Felt for her breath,
 Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
 With tears and fanning leaves.
 But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
 And early reapers plodded to the place
 Of golden sheaves,
 And dew-wet grass
 Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
 And new buds with new day
 Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
 Laura awoke as from a dream,
 Laughed in the innocent old way,

Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice;
 Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of grey,
 Her breath was sweet as May,
 And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
 Afterwards, when both were wives
 With children of their own;
 Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
 Their lives bound up in tender lives;
 Laura would call the little ones
 And tell them of her early prime,
 Those pleasant days long gone
 Of not-returning time:
 Would talk about the haunted glen,
 The wicked, quaint fruit-merchant men,
 Their fruits like honey to the throat
 But poison in the blood;
 (Men sell not such in any town):
 Would tell them how her sister stood
 In deadly peril to do her good,
 And win the fiery antidote:
 Then joining hands to little hands
 Would bid them cling together, –
 'For there is no friend like a sister
 In calm or stormy weather;
 To cheer one on the tedious way,
 To fetch one if one goes astray,
 To lift one if one totters down,
 To strengthen whilst one stands.'

196

Monna Innominata

A SONNET OF SONNETS

Beatrice, immortalized by 'altissimo poeta ... cotanto amante' [the greatest poet and lover combined]; Laura, celebrated by a great though an inferior bard, – have alike paid the exceptional penalty of exceptional honour, and have come down to us resplendent with charms, but (at least, to my apprehension) scant of attractiveness.

These heroines of world-wide fame were preceded by a bevy of unnamed ladies, 'donne innominate', sung by a school of less conspicuous poets; and in that land and that period which gave simultaneous birth to Catholics, to Albigenses, and to Troubadours, one can imagine many a lady as sharing her lover's poetic aptitude, while the barrier between them might be one held sacred by both, yet not such as to render mutual love incompatible with mutual honour.

Had such a lady spoken for herself, the portrait left us might have appeared more tender, if less dignified, than any drawn even by a devoted friend. Or had the Great Poetess of our own day and nation only been unhappy instead of happy, her circumstances would have invited her to bequeath to us, in lieu of the 'Portuguese Sonnets', an inimitable 'donna innominata' drawn not from fancy but from feeling, and worthy to occupy a niche beside Beatrice and Laura.

I

'Lo di che han detto a' dolci amici addio.' – Dante

'Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci!' – Petrarca

Come back to me, who wait and watch for you: –

Or come not yet, for it is over then,

And long it is before you come again,

So far between my pleasures are and few.

196, I. Epigraphs: *Purgatorio* 8, 3: 'That day when they have said adieu to their sweet friends'; *Sonnetti* 64, 12: 'Love, with what strength you overcome me today!'