

### **Sonnet 01: Thou Art Not Lovelier Than Lilacs,—No**

Thou art not lovelier than lilacs,—no,  
Nor honeysuckle; thou art not more fair  
Than small white single poppies,—I can bear  
Thy beauty; though I bend before thee, though  
From left to right, not knowing where to go,  
I turn my troubled eyes, nor here nor there  
Find any refuge from thee, yet I swear  
So has it been with mist,—with moonlight so.

Like him who day by day unto his draught  
Of delicate poison adds him one drop more  
Till he may drink unharmed the death of ten,  
Even so, inured to beauty, who have quaffed  
Each hour more deeply than the hour before,  
I drink—and live—what has destroyed some men.

### **Sonnet 03: Mindful Of You The Sodden Earth In Spring**

Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring,  
And all the flowers that in the springtime grow,  
And dusty roads, and thistles, and the slow  
Rising of the round moon, all throats that sing  
The summer through, and each departing wing,  
And all the nests that the bared branches show,  
And all winds that in any weather blow,  
And all the storms that the four seasons bring.

You go no more on your exultant feet  
Up paths that only mist and morning knew,  
Or watch the wind, or listen to the beat  
Of a bird's wings too high in air to view,—  
But you were something more than young and sweet  
And fair,—and the long year remembers you.

## **Sonnet 06: Bluebeard**

This door you might not open, and you did;  
So enter now, and see for what slight thing  
You are betrayed.... Here is no treasure hid  
No cauldron, no clear crystal mirroring  
The sought-for truth, no heads of women slain  
For greed like yours, no writhings of distress  
But only what you see.... Look yet again—  
An empty room, cobwebbed and comfortless  
Yet this alone out of my life I kept  
Unto myself, lest any know me quite;  
And you did so profane me when you crept  
Unto the threshold of this room to-night  
That I must never more behold your face.  
This now is yours. I seek another place.

## **Afternoon on a Hill**

I will be the gladdest thing  
Under the sun!  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
And not pick one.

I will look at cliffs and clouds  
With quiet eyes,  
Watch the wind bow down the grass,  
And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show  
Up from the town,  
I will mark which must be mine,  
And then start down!

### **I Dreamed I Moved Among The Elysian Fields**

I dreamed I moved among the Elysian fields,  
In converse with sweet women long since dead;  
And out of blossoms which that meadow yields  
I wove a garland for your living head.  
Danai, that was the vessel for a day  
Of golden Jove, I saw, and at her side,  
Whom Jove the Bull desired and bore away,  
Europa stood, and the Swan's featherless bride.  
All these were mortal women, yet all these  
Above the ground had had a god for guest;  
Freely I walked beside them and at ease,  
Addressing them, by them again addressed,  
And marvelled nothing, for remembering you,  
Wherefore I was among them well I knew.

### **No rose that in a garden ever grew**

No rose that in a garden ever grew,  
In Homer's or in Omar's or in mine,  
Though buried under centuries of fine  
Dead dust of roses, shut from sun and dew  
Forever, and forever lost from view,  
But must again in fragrance rich as wine  
The grey aisles of the air incarnadine  
When the old summers surge into a new.  
Thus when I swear, "I love with all my heart,"  
'Tis with the heart of Lilith that I swear,  
'Tis with the love of Lesbia and Lucrece;  
And thus as well my love must lose some part  
Of what it is, had Helen been less fair,  
Or perished young, or stayed at home in Greece.

## Exiled

Searching my heart for its true sorrow,  
This is the thing I find to be:  
That I am weary of words and people,  
Sick of the city, wanting the sea;

Wanting the sticky, salty sweetness  
Of the strong wind and shattered spray;  
Wanting the loud sound and the soft sound  
Of the big surf that breaks all day.

Always before about my dooryard,  
Marking the reach of the winter sea,  
Rooted in sand and dragging drift-wood,  
Straggled the purple wild sweet-pea;

Always I climbed the wave at morning,  
Shook the sand from my shoes at night,  
That now am caught beneath great buildings,  
Stricken with noise, confused with light.

If I could hear the green piles groaning  
Under the windy wooden piers,  
See once again the bobbing barrels,  
And the black sticks that fence the weirs,

If I could see the weedy mussels  
Crusting the wrecked and rotting hulls,  
Hear once again the hungry crying  
Overhead, of the wheeling gulls,

Feel once again the shanty straining  
Under the turning of the tide,  
Fear once again the rising freshet,  
Dread the bell in the fog outside,—

I should be happy,—that was happy  
All day long on the coast of Maine!  
I have a need to hold and handle  
Shells and anchors and ships again!

I should be happy, that am happy  
Never at all since I came here.  
I am too long away from water.  
I have a need of water near.

## Spring

To what purpose, April, do you return again?  
Beauty is not enough.  
You can no longer quiet me with the redness  
Of little leaves opening stickily.  
I know what I know.  
The sun is hot on my neck as I observe  
The spikes of the crocus.  
The smell of the earth is good.  
It is apparent that there is no death.  
But what does that signify?  
Not only under ground are the brains of men  
Eaten by maggots.  
Life in itself  
Is nothing,  
An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.  
It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,  
April  
Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers.

## Tavern

I'll keep a little tavern  
Below the high hill's crest,  
Wherein all grey-eyed people  
May set them down and rest.

There shall be plates a-plenty,  
And mugs to melt the chill  
Of all the grey-eyed people  
Who happen up the hill.

There sound will sleep the traveller,  
And dream his journey's end,  
But I will rouse at midnight  
The falling fire to tend.

Aye, 'tis a curious fancy—  
But all the good I know  
Was taught me out of two grey eyes  
A long time ago.

## **To a Young Poet**

Time cannot break the bird's wing from the bird.  
Bird and wing together  
Go down, one feather.

No thing that ever flew,  
Not the lark, not you,  
Can die as others do.