

The Marble Faun, William Faulkner

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Prologue

The poplar trees sway to and fro

That through this gray old garden go

Like slender girls with nodding heads,

Whispering above the beds

Of tall tufted hollyhocks,

Of purple asters and of phlox;

Caught in the daisies’ dreaming gold

Recklessly scattered wealth untold

About their slender graceful feet

Like poised dancers, lithe and fleet.

The candled flames of roses here

Gutter gold in this still air,

And clouds glide down the western sky

To watch this sun-drenched revery,

While the poplars’ shining crests

Lightly brush their silvered breasts,

Dreaming not of winter snows

That soon will shake their maiden rows.

The days dream by, golden-white,

About the fountain’s silver light

That lifts and shivers in the breeze

Gracefully slim as are the trees;

Then shakes down its glistered hair

Upon the still pool’s mirrored, fair

Flecked face.

 Why am I sad? I?

Why am I not content? The sky

Warms me and yet I cannot break

My marble bonds. That quick keen snake

Is free to come and go, while I

Am prisoner to dream and sigh

For things I know, yet cannot know,

‘Twixt sky above and earth below.

The spreading earth calls to my feet

Of orchards bright with fruits to eat,

Of hills and streams on either hand;

Of sleep at night on moon-blanched sand:

The whole world breathes and calls to me

Who marble-bound must ever be.

THE MARBLE FAUN

IF I were free, then I would go

Where the first chill spring winds blow,

Wrapping a light shocked mountain’s brow

With shrilling tongues, and swirling now,

And fiery upward flaming, leap

From craggy teeth above each deep

Cold and wet with silence. Here

I fly before the streaming year

Along the fierce cold mountain tops

To which the sky runs down and stops;

And with the old moon watching me

Leaping and shouting joyously

Along each crouching dark abyss

Through which waters rush and hiss,

I whirl the echoes west and east

To hover each copse where lurks the beast,

Silence, till they shatter back

Across the ravine’s smoky crack.

Here Pan’s sharp hoofed feet have pressed

His message on the chilly crest,

Saying — Follow where I lead,

For all the world springs to my reed

Woven up and woven down,

Thrilling all the sky and ground

With shivering heat and quivering cold;

To pierce and burst the swollen mold;

Shrilling in each waiting brake:

Come, ye living, stir and wake!

As the tumbling sunlight falls

Spouting down the craggy walls

To hiss upon the frozen rocks

That dot the hills in crouching flocks,

So I plunge in some deep vale

Where first violets, shy and pale,

Appear, and spring with tear-stained cheeks

Peeps at me from the neighboring brakes,

Gathering her torn draperies up

For flight if I cast my eyes up.

Swallows dart and skimming fly

Like arrows painted on the sky,

And the twanging of the string

Is the faint high quick crying

That they, downward shooting, spin

Through the soundless swelling din.

Dogwood shines through thin trees there

Like jewels in a woman’s hair;

A sudden brook hurries along

Singing its reverted song,

Flashing in white frothèd shocks

About upstanding polished rocks;

Slender shoots draw sharp and clear

And white withes shake as though in fear

Upon the quick stream’s melted snow

That seems to dance rather than flow.

Then on every hand awakes

From the dim and silent brakes

The breathing of the growing things,

The living silence of all springs

To come and that have gone before;

And upon a woodland floor

I watch the sylvans dance till dawn

While the brooding spring looks on.

The spring is quick with child, and sad;

And in her dampened hair sits clad

Watching the immortal dance

To the world’s throbbing dissonance

That Pan’s watchful shrill pipes blow

Of the fiery days that go

Like wine across the world; then high:

His pipes weave magic on the sky

Shrill with joy and pain of birth

Of another spring on earth.

HARK! a sound comes from the brake

And I glide nearer like a snake

To peer into its leafy deeps

Where like a child the spring still sleeps.

Upon a chill rock gray and old

Where the willows’ simple fold

Falls, an unstirred curtain, Pan —

As he sat since the world began —

Stays and broods upon the scene

Beside a hushèd pool where lean

His own face and the bending sky

In shivering soundless amity.

Pan sighs, and raises to his lips

His pipes, down which his finger-tips

Wander lovingly; then low

And clearly simple does he blow

A single thin clear melody

That pauses, spreading liquidly,

While the world stands sharp and mute

Waiting for his magic flute.

A sudden strain, silver and shrill

As narrow water down a hill,

Splashes rippling as though drawn

In shattered quicksilver on

The willow curtain, and through which

It wanders without halt or hitch

Into silent meadows; when

It pauses, breathing, and again

Climbs as though to reach the sky

Like the soaring silver cry

Of some bird. A note picks out,

A silver moth that whirrs about

A single rose, then settles low

On the sorrowful who go

Along a willowed green-stained pool

To lie and sleep within its cool

Virginity.

Ah, the world

About which mankind’s dreams are furled

Like a cocoon, thin and cold,

And yet that is never old!

Earth’s heart burns with winter snows

As fond and tremulous Pan blows

For other springs and cold and sad

As this; and sitting garment-clad

In sadness with dry stricken eyes

Bent to the unchanging skies,

Pan sighs and broods upon the scene

Beside this hushèd pool where lean

His own face and the bending sky

In shivering soundless amity.

ALL the air is gray with rain

Above the shaken fields of grain,

Cherry orchards moveless drip

Listening to their blossoms slip

Quietly from wet black boughs.

There a soaking broad-thatched house

Steams contemplatively. I

Sit beneath the weeping sky

Crouched about the mountains’ rim

Drawing her loose hair over them.

My eyes, peace-filled by falling rain,

Brood upon the steamy plain,

Crouched beneath a dripping tree

Where strong and damp rise up to me

The odors of the bursting mold

Upon the earth’s slow-breathing old

Breast; of acorns swelling tight

To thrust green shoots into the light

As shade for me in years to come

When my eyes grow dim and I am dumb

With sun-soaked age and lack of strength

Of things that have lived out the length

Of life; and when the nameless pain

To fuller live and know again

No more will send me over earth

Puzzling about the worth

Of this and that, nor crying “Hence!”

At my unseeking impotence

To have about my eyes close-furled

All the beauty in the world.

But content to watch by day

The dancing light’s unthinking play

Ruffling the pool. Then I’ll be

Beneath the roses. sleepily

Soaking in the sun-drenched air

Without wish or will or care,

With my softened fading eyes

Shackled to the curving skies.

THE poplars look beyond the wall

With bending hair, and to me call,

Curving shivering hands to me

Whispering what they can see:

Of a dim and silent way

Through a valley white with may.

On either hand gossiping beeches

Stir against the lilac reaches

Half of earth and half of sky;

There the aspens quakingly

Gather in excited bands,

The dappled birches’ fluttering hands

Cast their swift and silver light

Through the glade spun greenish white.

So alone I follow on

Where slowly piping Pan has gone

To draw the quiet browsing flocks,

While a blackbird calls and knocks

At noon across the dusty downs

In quivering peace, until Pan sounds

His piping gently to the bird,

And saving this no sound is heard.

Now the blackbirds’ gold wired throats

Spill their long cool mellow notes;

In solemn flocks slowly wheeling

Intricately, without revealing

Their desires, as on blue space

They thread and cross like folds of lace

Woven black; then shrilling go

Like shutters swinging to and fro.

ON the downs beyond the trees

Loved by the thrilling breeze,

While the blackbird calls and knocks

Go the shepherds with their flocks.

It is noon, and the air

Is shimmering still, for nowhere

Is there a sound. The sky, half waked,

Half sleep, is calm; for peace is laked

Between the world rim’s far spread dikes

And the trees, from which there strikes

The flute notes that I, listening, hear

Liquidly falling on my ear:

“Come quietly, Faun, to my call;

Come, come, the noon will cool and pass

That now lies edgelessly in thrall

Upon the ripened sun-stilled grass.

“There is no sound in all the land,

There is no breath in all the skies;

Here Warmth and Peace go hand in hand

‘Neath Silence’s inverted eyes.

“My call, spreading endlessly,

My mellow call pulses and knocks;

Come, Faun, and solemnly

Float shoulderward your autumned locks.

“Let your fingers, languorous,

Slightly curl, palm upward rest,

The silent noon waits over us,

The feathers stir not on his breast.

“There is no sound nor shrill of pipe,

Your feet are noiseless on the ground;

The earth is full and stillily ripe,

In all the land there is no sound.

“There is a great God who sees all

And in my throat bestows this boon:

To ripple the silence with my call

When the world sleeps and it is noon.”

When I hear the blackbirds’ song

Piercing cool and mellowly long,

I pause to hear, nor do I breathe

As the dusty gorse and heath

Breathe not, for their magic call

Holds all the pausing earth in thrall

At noon; then I know the skies

Move not, but halt in reveries

Of golden-veiled and misty blue;

Then the blackbirds wheeling through

By Pan guarded in the skies,

Piercing the earth with remorseless eyes

Are burned scraps of paper cast

On a lake quiet, deep, and vast.

UPON a wood’s dim shaded edge

Stands a dusty hawthorn hedge

Beside a road from which I pass

To cool my feet in deep rich grass.

I pause to listen to the song

Of a brook spilling along

Behind a patchy willow screen

Whose lazy evening shadows lean

Their scattered gold upon a glade

Through which the staring daisies wade,

And the resilient poplar trees,

Slowly turning in the breeze,

Flash their facets to the sun,

Swaying in slow unison.

Here quietude folds a spell

Within a stilly shadowed dell

Wherein I rest, and through the leaves

The sun a soundless pattern weaves

Upon the floor. The leafy glade

Is pensive in the dappled shade,

While the startled sunlight drips

From beech and alder fingertips,

And birches springing suddenly

Erect in silence sleepily

Clinging to their slender limbs,

Whitening them as shadow dims.

As I lie here my fancy goes

To where a quiet oak bestows

Its shadow on a dreaming scene

Over which the broad boughs lean

A canopy. The brook’s a stream

On which long still days lie and dream,

And where the lusty summer walks —

Around his head are lilac stalks —

In the shade beneath the trees

To let the cool stream fold his knees;

While I lie in the leafy shade

Until the nymphs troop down the glade.

Their limbs that in the spring were white

Are now burned golden by sunlight.

They near the marge, and there they meet

Inverted selves stretched at their feet;

And they kneel languorously there

To comb and braid their short blown hair

Before they slip into the pool —

Warm gold in silver liquid cool.

Evening turns and sunlight falls

In flecks between the leafèd walls,

Like golden butterflies whose wings

Slowly pulse and beat. Slow sings

The stream in a lower key

Murmuring down quietly

Between its solemn purple stone

With cooling ivy overgrown.

Sunset stains the western sky;

Night comes soon, and now I

Follow toward the evening star.

A sheep bell tinkles faint and far,

Then drips in silence as the sheep

Move like clouds across the deep

Still dusky meadows wet with dew.

I stretch and roll and draw through

The fresh sweet grass, and the air

Is softer than my own soft hair.

I lift up my eyes; the green

West is a lake on which has been

Cast a single lily. — See!

In meadows stretching over me

Are humming stars as thick as bees,

And the reaching inky trees

Sweep the sky. I lie and hear

The voices of the fecund year,

While the dark grows dim and deep,

And I glide into dreamless sleep.

CAWING rooks in tangled flight

Come crowding home against the night.

And all other wings are still

Except rooks tumbling down the hill

Of evening sky. The crimson falls

Upon the solemn ivied walls;

The horns of sunset slowly sound

Between the waiting sky and ground;

The cedars painted on the sky

Hide the sun slow flamingly

Repeated level on the lake,

Smooth and still and without shake,

Until the swans’ inverted grace

Wreathes in thought its placid face

With spreading lines like opening fans

Moved by white and languid hands.

Now the vesper song of bells

Beneath the evening flows and swells,

And the twilight’s silver throat

Slowly repeats each resonant note:

The dying day gives those who sorrow

A boon no king can give: a morrow.

The westering sun has climbed the wall

And silently we watch night fall

While sunset lingers in the trees

Its subtle gold-shot tapestries,

The sky is velvet overhead

Where petalled stars are canopied

Like sequins in a spreading train

Without fold or break or stain.

A cool wind whispers by the heads

Of flowers dreaming in their beds

Like convent girls, filling their sleep

With strange dreams from the outer deep.

On every hill battalioned trees

March skyward on unmoving knees,

And like a spider on a veil

Climbs the moon. A nightingale,

Lost in the trees against the sky,

Loudly repeats its jewelled cry.

I AM sad, nor yet can I,

For all my questing, reason why;

And now as night falls I will go

Where two breezes joining flow

Above a stream whose gleamless deeps

Caressingly sing the while it sleeps

Upon sands powdered by the moon.

And there I’ll lie to hear it croon

In fondling a wayward star

Fallen from the shoreless far

Sky, while winds in misty stream,

Laughing and weeping in a dream,

Whisper of an orchard’s trees

That, shaken by the aimless breeze,

Let their blossoms fade and slip

Soberly, as lip to lip

They touch the misty grasses fanned

To ripples by the breeze.

Here stand

The clustered lilacs faint as cries

Against the silken-breasted skies;

They nod and sway, and slow as rain

Their slowly falling petals stain

The grass as through them breezes stray,

Smoothing them in silver play.

And we, the marbles in the glade,

Dreaming in the leafy shade

Are saddened, for we know that all

Things save us must fade and fall,

And the moon that sits there in the skies

Draws her hair across her eyes:

She sees the blossoms blow and die,

Soberly and quietly,

Till spring breaks in the waiting glade

And the first thin branchèd shade

Falls ‘thwart them, and the swallows’ cry

Calls down from the stirring sky,

Thin and cold and hot as flame

Where spring is nothing but a name.

The stream flows calmly without sound

In the darkness gathered round;

Trembling to the vagrant breeze

About me stand the inky trees

Peopled by some bird’s loud cries,

Until it seems as if the skies

Had shaken down their blossomed stars

Seeking among the trees’ dim bars,

Crying aloud, each for its mate,

About the old earth, insensate,

Seemingly, to their white woe,

But their sorrow does she know

And her breast, unkempt and dim,

Throbs her sorrow out to them.

The dying day gives all who sorrow

The boon no king may give: a morrow.

THE ringèd moon sits eerily

Like a mad woman in the sky,

Dropping flat hands to caress

The far world’s shaggy flanks and breast,

Plunging white hands in the glade

Elbow deep in leafy shade

Where birds sleep in each silent brake

Silverly, there to wake

The quivering loud nightingales

Whose cries like scattered silver sails

Spread across the azure sea.

Her hands also caress me:

My keen heart also does she dare;

While turning always through the skies

Her white feet mirrored in my eyes

Weave a snare about my brain

Unbreakable by surge or strain,

For the moon is mad, for she is old,

And many’s the bead of a life she’s told;

And many’s the fair one she’s seen wither:

They pass, they pass, and know not whither.

The hushèd earth, so calm, so old,

Dreams beneath its heath and wold —

And heavy scent from thorny hedge

Paused and snowy on the edge

Of some dark ravine, from where

Mists as soft and thick as hair

Float silver in the moon.

Stars sweep down — or are they stars? —

Against the pines’ dark etchèd bars.

Along a brooding moon-wet hill

Dogwood shines so cool and still,

Like hands that, palm up, rigid lie

In invocation to the sky

As they spread there, frozen white,

Upon the velvet of the night.

THE world is still. How still it is!

About my avid stretching ears

The earth is pulseless in the dim

Silence that flows into them

And forms behind my eyes, until

My head is full: I feel it spill

Like water down my breast. The world,

A muted violin where are curled

Pan’s fingers, waits, supine and cold

And bound soundlessly in fold

On fold of blind calm rock

Edgeless in the moonlight’s shock,

Until the hand that grasps the bow

Descends; then grave and strong and low

It rises to his waiting ears.

The music of all passing years

Flows over him and down his breast

Of ice and gold, as in the west

Sunsets flame, and all dawns burn

Eastwardly, and calm skies turn

Always about his frozen head:

Peace for living, peace for dead.

And the hand that draws the bow

Stops not, as grave and strong and low

About his cloudy head it curls

The endless sorrow of all worlds,

The while he bends dry stricken eyes

Above the throngs; perhaps he sighs

For all the full world watching him

As seasons change from bright to dim.

And my eyes too are cool with tears

For the stately marching years,

For old earth dumb and strong and sad

With life so willy-nilly clad,

And mute and impotent like me

Who marble bound must ever be;

And my carven eyes embrace

The dark world’s dumbly dreaming face,

For my crooked limbs have pressed

Her all-wise pain-softened breast

Until my hungry heart is full

Of aching bliss unbearable.

THE hills are resonant with soft humming;

It is a breeze that pauses, strumming

On the golden-wirèd stars

The deep full music to which was

The song of life through ages sung;

And soundlessly there weaves among

The chords a star, a falling rose

That only this high garden grows;

A falling hand with beauty dumb

Stricken by the hands that strum

The sky, is gone: yet still I see

This hand swiftly and soundlessly

Sliding now across my eyes

As it then slid down the skies.

Soft the breeze, a steady flame

Cooled by the forest whence it came,

Slipping across the dappled lea

To climb the dim walls of the sea;

To comb the wave-ponies’ manes back

Where the water shivers black

With quiet depth and solitude

And licks the caverned sky. The wood

Stirs to a faint far mystic tone:

The reed of Pan who, all alone

In some rock-chilled silver dell,

Thins the song of Philomel

Sad in her dark dim echoed bower

Watching the far world bud and flower,

Watching the moon in ether stilled

Who, with her broad face humped and hilled

In sleep, dreams naked in the air

While Philomel dreams naked here.

Clear and sad sounds Pan’s thin strain,

Dims in mystery, grows again;

Mirrors the light limbs falling, dying,

Soothes night voices calling, crying,

Stills the winds’ far seeking tone

Where fallow springs have died and grown;

Hushes the nightbirds’ jewelled cries

And flames the shadows’ subtleties

Through endless labyrinthine walls

Of sounding corridors and halls

Where sound and silence soundless keep

Their slumbrous noon. Sweet be their sleep.

ALL day I run before a wind,

Keen and blue and without end,

Like a fox before the hounds

Across the mellow sun-shot downs

That smell like crispened warm fresh bread;

And the sky stretched overhead

Has drawn across its face a veil

Of gold and purple. My limbs fail

And I plunge panting down to rest

Upon earth’s sharp and burning breast.

I lie flat, and feel its cold

Beating heart that’s never old,

And yet has felt the ages pass

Above its heather, trees, and grass.

The azure veils fall from the sky

And on the world’s rim shimmering lie,

While the bluely flashing sea

Pulses through infinitely.

Up! Away! Now I will go

To some orchard’s golden row

Of bursting mellow pears and sweet

Berries and dusky grapes to eat.

I singing crush them to my lips,

Staining cheek and fingertips,

Then fill my hands, I know not why,

And off again along the sky

Down through the trees, beside the stream

Veiled too, and golden as a dream,

To lie once more in some warm glade

Deep walled by the purple shade

My fruits beside, and so I lie

In thin sun sifting from the sky

Like a cloak to cover me:

I sink in sleep resistlessly

While the sun slides smoothly down

The west, and green dusk closes round

My glade that the sun filled up

As gold wine stands within a cup.

Now silent autumn fires the trees

To slow flame, and calmly sees

The changing days burn down the skies

Reflected in her quiet eyes,

While about her as she kneels

Crouch the heavy-fruited fields

Along whose borders poplars run

Burnished by the waning sun.

Vineyards struggle up the hill

Toward the sky, dusty and still,

Thick with heavy purple grapes

And golden bursting fruits whose shapes

Are full and hot with sun. Here each

Slow exploding oak and beech

Blaze up about her dreaming knees,

Flickering at her draperies.

Each covert, a blaze of light

Upon horizons blueish white

Is a torch, the pines are bronze

And stiffly stretch their sculptured fronds

Over the depthless hushed ravine

Wherein their shadows change to green,

Then to purple in the deeps

Where the waiting winter sleeps.

THE moon is mad, and dimly burns,

And with her prying fingers turns

Inside out thicket and copse

Curiously, and then she stops

Staring about her, and the down

Grows sharp in sadness gathering round,

Powdering each darkling rock

And the hunchèd grain in shock

On shock in solemn rows;

And after each a shadow goes

Staring skyward, listening

Into the silence glistening

With watching stars that, sharp and sad,

Ring the solemn staring mad

Moon; and winds in monotone

Brood where shaken grain had grown

In bloomless fields that raise their bare

Breasts against the dying year.

And yet I do not move, for I

Am sad beneath this autumn sky,

For I am sudden blind and chill

Here beneath my frosty hill,

And I cry moonward in stiff pain

Unheeded, for the moon again

Stares blandly, while beneath her eyes

The silent world blazes and dies,

And leaves slip down and cover me

With sorrow and desire to be —

While the world waits, cold and sere —

Like it, dead with the dying year.

THE world stands without move or sound

In this white silence gathered round

It like a hood. It is so still

That earth lies without wish or will

To breathe. My garden, stark and white,

Sits soundless in the falling light

Of lifting bush and sudden hedge

Ice bound and ghostly on the edge

Of my world, curtained by the snow

Drifting, sifting; fast, now slow;

Falling endlessly from skies

Calm and gray, some far god’s eyes.

The soundless quiet flakes slide past

Like teardrops on a sheet of glass,

Ah, there is some god above

Whose tears of pity, pain, and love

Slowly freeze and brimming slow

Upon my chilled and marbled woe;

The pool, sealed now by ice and snow,

Is dreaming quietly below,

Within its jewelled eye keeping

The mirrored skies it knew in spring.

How soft the snow upon my face!

And delicate cold! I can find grace

In its endless quiescence

For my enthrallèd impotence:

Solace from a pitying breast

Bringing quietude and rest

To dull my eyes; and sifting slow

Upon the waiting earth below

Fold veil on veil of peacefulness

Like wings to still and keep and bless.

WHY cannot we always be

Left steeped in this immensity

Of softly stirring peaceful gray

That follows on the dying day?

Here I can drug my prisoned woe

In the night wind’s sigh and flow,

But now we, who would dream at night,

Are awakened by the light

Of paper lanterns, in whose glow

Fantastically to and fro

Pass, in a loud extravagance

And reft of grace, yet called a dance,

Dancers in a blatant crowd

To brass horns horrible and loud.

The blaring beats on gustily

From every side. Must I see

Always this unclean heated thing

Debauching the unarmèd spring

While my back I cannot turn,

Nor may not shut these eyes that burn?

The poplars shake and sway with fright

Uncontrollable, the night

Powerless in ruthless grasp

Lifts hidden hands as though to clasp,

In invocation for surcease,

The flying stars.

Once there was peace

Calm handed where the roses blow,

And hyacinths, straight row on row;

And hushed among the trees. What!

Has my poor marble heart forgot

This surging noise in dreams of peace

That it once thought could never cease

Nor pale? Still the blaring falls

Crashing between my garden walls

Gustily about my ears

And my eyes, uncooled by tears,

Are drawn as my stone heart is drawn,

Until the east bleeds in the dawn

And the clean face of the day

Drives them slinkingly away.

DAYS and nights into years weave

A net to blind and to deceive

Me, yet my full heart yearns

As the world about me turns

For things I know, yet cannot know,

‘Twixt sky above and earth below.

All day I watch the sunlight spill

Inward, driving out the chill

That night has laid here fold on fold

Between these walls, till they would hold

No more. With half closed eyes I see

Peace and quiet liquidly

Steeping the walls and cloaking them

With warmth and silence soaking them;

They do not know, nor care to know,

Why evening waters sigh in flow;

Why about the pole star turn

Stars that flare and freeze and burn;

Nor why the seasons, springward wheeling,

Set the bells of living pealing.

They sorrow not that they are dumb:

For they would not a god become.

… I am sun-steeped, until I

Am all sun, and liquidly

I leave my pedestal and flow

Quietly along each row,

Breathing in their fragrant breath

And that of the earth beneath.

Time may now unheeded pass:

I am the life that warms the grass —

Or does the earth warm me? I know

Not, nor do I care to know.

I am with the flowers one,

Now that is my bondage done;

And in the earth I shall sleep

To never wake, to never weep

For things I know, yet cannot know,

‘Twixt sky above and earth below,

For Pan’s understanding eyes

Quietly bless me from the skies,

Giving me, who knew his sorrow,

The gift of sleep to be my morrow.

Epilogue

May walks in this garden, fair

As a girl veiled in her hair

And decked in tender green and gold;

And yet my marble heart is cold

Within these walls where people pass

Across the close-clipped emerald grass

To stare at me with stupid eyes

Or stand in noisy ecstasies

Before my marble, while the breeze

That whispers in the shivering trees

Sings of quiet hill and plain,

Of vales where softly broods the rain,

Of orchards whose pink flaunted trees,

Gold flecked by myriad humming bees,

Enclose a roof-thatch faded gray,

Like a giant hive. Away

To brilliant pines upon the sea

Where waves linger silkenly

Upon the shelving sand, and sedge

Rustling gray along the edge

Of dunes that rise against the sky

Where painted sea-gulls wheel and fly.

Ah, how all this calls to me

Who marble-bound must ever be

While turn unchangingly the years.

My heart is full, yet sheds no tears

To cool my burning carven eyes

Bent to the unchanging skies:

I would be sad with changing year,

Instead, a sad, bound prisoner,

For though about me seasons go

My heart knows only winter snow.

April, May, June, 1919

The End