

Perils of the Small Hours, Aldous Huxley

Perils of the Small Hours

WHEN life burns low as the fire in the grate  
And all the evening's books are read,  
I sit alone, save for the dead  
And the lovers I have grown to hate.  
But all at once the narrow gloom  
Of hatred and despair expands  
In tenderness: thought stretches hands  
To welcome to the midnight room  
Another presence:-a memory  
Of how last year in the sunlit field,  
Laughing, you suddenly revealed  
Beauty in immortality.  
For so it is; a gesture strips  
Life bare of all its make-believe.  
All unprepared we may receive  
Our casual apocalypse.  
Sheer beauty, then you seemed to stir  
Unbodied soul; soul sleeps to night,  
And love comes, dimming spirit's sight,  
When body plays interpreter.

The end