A SONG DOMESTIC: BY MARY BRECHT PULVER

SING of my kitchen!
Sing you of cathedrals; of dim, purple crypt; of
dimpling brook; of wind-swept grasses; of
sun-pageants; of festal boards a-glitter
with cheer of silver and crystal—
Sing you of the heart—of tears—of laughter—
of love—

But I sing of Life—of that whence emanates the
sap of life; of the shrine of things domestic
—the kitchen. For birth and death may be
achieved without it, but it is life’s necessity.
Into the fabric of my song are woven many
things. Humble things! My teakettle!
A great plump-shouldered vessel singing its time-
old bubbly chant.
(The day is great without, with a plaintive, whin-
ing little wind fumbling at the window.) But
my teakettle purrs softly on, humming quietly
to itself.

What are you crooning, O teakettle?

“It is a lullaby I sing. Long ago I learned it—I
and my brothers. The first teakettle sang it
from the hob-corner—sang it to a little one
sleeping in its cradle by the fire. The mother
wrought at her spindle and pushed the cradle
with her foot. She sang alone to the child,
and her song was of the gray sea outside, of
the fishing vessels and the bleak winds. And
while she sang the wind moaned in the chim-
ney and the babe fretted, for her song came
from a grieving heart. And the kettle, pon-
dering, knew this, and at length commenced
to sing this same little lullaby of mine, and
the babe slept, and at length also the sad
mother.

But of the song I cannot tell more save that it
has in it peace—and comfort—and the whis-
per of Eternity.”

(The little wind frets without and wails down
the chimney.)
I look into my fire-box.
What a cheerful, ruddy mass! The glowing coals!
They, too, murmur and sing and leap with
vivid color-play:
“We burn. We burn. That you may have
warmth to boil your kettle—to roast your
meats—to bake your great loaves. We give
our lives to be consumed for you,
Cheerfully, cheerfully.”

The ranks of shining tins and coppers! My will-
ing servitors they.
Let the winds assail. Let the nip of November
wait outside—whose heart can fail to be
staunch here at the household shrine? For
its voice is of peace and the goodness of
things.
My stove, all radiant, invites alluringly. Sit with
me here this gray afternoon and listen to the
soft little life sounds. My old clock ticking
the passing of the hours; my old cat breath-
ing deep drafts of peace at my feet; my
kettle bubbling—bubbling its sleepy lullaby—
my fire chirring, whispering warmly, rebuk-
ing the wind, that tries to creep down it.
Warm! warm! warm as love—warm as Life—
the very heart of God speaks here.

Courtesy of The Independent.