A CHANT OF SPRING

SONG of dreary days
And ways forlorn,
Before the lambs like lily buds appear
Scampering amid the herds of sanguine, foolish sheep
That through the meadow hoof their way sedately;
When the cold winds of March have called only
A single crow from woodlands far away;
When pines have scarcely dreamed of greener days,
Yet dreaming, thrill with pleasure through their veins,
And softer glow.
Beside our cottage door the rambling rose,
A naked, thorny shoot, has slowly brightened;
Upon the hill, a fire, a ruddy fire of spring,
In stalks of underbrush the landscape lightened.
There is a music in the wandering air,
When stars are bright and all the world is bare,
A music wild and rare.
Thrilled to the core, the poplar’s single purpose
To reach unto that mystic dome above us;
The bending, waving, undulating motion
And curves that tell of quaint caprice and notion
Of myriad trees; the gracious airs and ways
Of tall centurions, or fantastic plays
Of trees that dance and caper all their days—
All these would still proclaim in forest gloaming;
When stars come out and winds have hushed their moaning—
Would tell how all the forest doth respond.
To strains supernal.
Sometimes, I think, the air with joy is ringing,
Far overhead the stars still solemn singing,
Forever joy and life their rapture flinging.
See, when the summer time to fullest seeming
The things of earth has brought—
In August days, when incense fills the air,
Of pines and flowers and herbs, like old wine flowing,
From the pure wine press of the wild grape growing in the warm sun:
The loon sends o’er the lake his soft, low call.
The cricket chirps, the lisping katy-did
After a hush begins again in chorus.
Tender, yet rapturous, the music swells.
Joy takes his lordly flight
Across the moor, and in the darksome glen
Makes pure the night.
A CHANT OF SPRING

O thou, dear heart, who in the twilight walketh,
And in the starry time, alone,
Thou who hast wondered at the eternal chanting,
The wailing from the depths of stately forests and boundless sea,
Wherefore thy wonder?
Hath not some luscious melody fashioned thee,
Some music more divine played on thine hungering ear,
Far lovelier than the darkened forests hear?
For thou, beloved, art sweeter than the lilies,
Thy hands are fair, and thou art full of beauty;
So tall and white thou art, so lithe and youthful,
Godlike thou movest, and thou art very fair.
There came a form and spoke.

His hand was on a golden harp, his voice like the sounding sea.

"Surely thou knowest the influences that are sent from the Pleiades.
The spirit of jasmine and roses, and the blue of Hesperides;
In the awful gloom of the mountain storm
Thou exultest, and over the heights art borne;
Thou walkest, and each footfall keeps time
To some exquisite minstrelsy:
For thou art very sweet and passing fair."

Now he has gone away who spoke to me.
And silence reigns where once was melody.
His voice that sounded like the sighing sea,
His eyes that softly turned and looked on me,
Their glory yield no more.

And I am left alone with heart aflame,
A pale white flame of longing and desire.
I journey far beyond the farthest star—
Into the depths I plunge—to quench that fire.
But all things whisper to me, "Peace, be still!
Wait thou, and time shall all thy wants fulfil."
So I, who am afire, along the shore
Will linger till they come to me once more,
All those celestial ones we dream and know
Have waited for us since the long ago.

Unsheathed, before us now the mountains stand;
In naked elegance the woods are waiting the dainty pipes of spring.
Go softly, too, and in the light of Heaven
And the cool dews that soon will fall where roses grow
Refresh thyself: in His warm love refresh thyself,
Nor tempt the white flame passion of Heaven for thee.

Blanche Ableson.