

## ABSENCE

He saw Paris with eyes that seemed to have dropped their scales. It was very early and still wet. An old charwoman was sitting in the entrance of a dairy shop, weeping for her only son. Boylan stopped. She was very poor and weak.

"Come, Mother," he said, lifting her.

She looked into his face in a way that rowelled the man.

"Come on," he said softly. "We'll have breakfast, and you'll tell me. I belong to the widows and fatherless, too."

So they rocked away together.

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**Y**OU need send me no costly presents

To remind me of you.

Momently I am reminded.

I hear a snatch of a song.

Oh, it puts me into the mood I was in one tender  
September evening when you sang to me.

I hear no more of the song that is near,

Only your voice which is far away.

I catch an odor from a rose garden and remember all  
the sweet rosebuds you have fastened into my hair  
with kisses.

Everything beautiful speaks to me of you.

In everything, beautiful or no, I feel the essence of  
you, the strength of you, the broad humanity.

Weary, I lean upon you, Happy, I drink deep of you,

Ambitious, I work alongside you, Climbing the hills,

I catch hold of your hand, my comrade, Loving, I  
kiss you fervently.

Thus am I with you in spirit

Until that moment of happiness

When I hold you close to my heart,

And know that, for a time at least,

No space can separate us.

ETHEL MARJORIE KNAPP.