

A LOST SPIRIT

To Freda Wilson

I PASS by darkened windy ways,
Through bog and dripping heather;
I flash before the silver rays
The moon holds tight together.
I sing beneath the waning moon;
An ancient god-forgotten rune
Springs to my lips to taste, and soon
The way behind with light is strewn.

O silent city silver-lit,
O rainy roads reflecting
Tall houses where the old ghosts flit,
Their shadows thin projecting
Across my path—the street-lamps glare
Before my soft eyes everywhere.
Ah! men forget my face is fair,
The tangled glory of my hair.

O sobbing wind! O hedges dark!
O hills bereft and lonely!
They've snatched the hidden boundary-mark,
And left the ruins only.

Dimly the flickering shadows stray
Across the lonely hill-side way:
Why should I weep and howl and pray?
They sleep, and wait the empty day.

O dream of the red olden time!
 O clash of armour splendid!—
A string of wind-begotten rime,
 And all their pain was ended!
O lonely sea! O lonely earth!
O dying art of glorious mirth!
My song, my song is little worth
To bring their bastard seed to birth!

What need of me in thunder-flash?
 What need in battle story?
What need among the whitened ash
 Of old far-winnowed glory?
They call me not to birth-bed throes;
Invoke me not with gold and rose;
The summer wanes, the summer grows,
They call me not from fire or snows.

I linger by the cottage-door
 When twilight sings of sorrow;
I flit around the gorse-strewn moor,
 And all the gold I borrow.

But in mine eyes my doom is set,
Yea! in their golden-glooming fret
Is woven the divine regret,
And ah! my birth-time is not yet.