

MUSIC-PICTURES

To Rudolf Charles Cyriax

I

PALING fires of instant blue
Throb the lower heavens through;
In the higher
God is fire.

Green the calling of the hills;
Silver-noted sing the rills;
In the paling east doth rise
All the fire that flames and dies;
In the glowing west is set
The banner of divine regret;
In the midst betwixt the skies
God looks through the clouds and dies.

Lying on a bank of green,
All the gray is clearest seen;
All my floating thoughts arise
To the place where God still lies.
In my thought I clothe him now;
He is born behind my brow,
And again shall live and die
In the battle of the sky.

This I knew when long ago
I came to God suffused in woe,
And he gave his life to me,
And he died upon the tree,
And the tree gave fruit and bloom,
And it grew a god's green tomb.
And he rose again to be
All the pulsing world to me.

II

BROKEN by the tideless sea,
Seven songs I bring to thee;
Every song a vibrant string
Of my lute to me doth bring.

Under starry skies I rove,
Beneath a fragrant orange-grove:
And the wind with odours filled
Has my yearning heart-strings stilled.

Vibrant in the burning day,
Quiet in the night I lay;
On my lips a seal is set,
And my heart has lost regret.

But mine eyes with tears shine,
And my mouth is filled with brine;
Seven songs I gave to thee—
All my spirit's melody.

Whisper, whisper, through the fells,
Music that my lyre impels;
Seven songs I gave to thee
When I lay drowned in the sea.

III

GLOBE in globe encompassèd,
In a starry rune bespread;
Round the fleeting angel's head
Wine-bright air doth float:
In the mirror of the skies
All the flaming fires arise,
And I gazed until mine eyes
Are melted with the note.

IV

SILVER stars in the gray sea,
Crested with amber melody—
Dark gulls above the water skirl,
In Northern summer winds awhirl.

Give ear unto the trickling breath
Of streams whose current ends in death,
And feel the silver steel dart through,
And wake from dreams in water blue.

Fast by an island-forest sped,
I see the sunshine overhead;
I stretch my hand to reach the shore,
I lie amidst the waters' roar.

I lie within an amber breast;
Begirt with rose-blooms wild I rest:
No word, save only those I know,
From the transparent heavens flow.

Winds in the summer air have stilled
Each yearning longing unfulfilled,
Beneath the clouds that fled at dawn
Away my pulsing heart was drawn.

A silver cave I dimly see,
Hung with a sea-maid's tapestry:
The salt spray flings a fragrance rare
Upon the pure sea-foam-filled air.

I lie in dream of death and dawn,
Invisible around me drawn
A robe unseen; but felt and heard,
A rustle, and a dying bird.

The breath of dawn across my brow,
Awakened by a white may-bough
Across my mouth, I rise and go,
And watch the waters ebb and flow.

A call across the light green sea,
A note of hidden melody,
A throbbing string vibrating still,
A breath of morning from the hill.

And now the spirits of air attune
Their lyres to prophecies of noon.
Their golden eyes the mounting sun
Trace, and they greet him one by one

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Down a mountain-path they come,
With pipe and tabor, fife and drum;
I see them pass across the plain,
Their eyes far from the jolly main.

The morning in their hearts doth dwell—
The day-spring with her breasts a-swell;
A flash of summer, and I awake
Beside a gleaming forest lake.

V

THE shreds of music wafted far
Flash down in light from star to star;
The windy walls keep out the wind,
The forest stirs in cadence blind.

Beyond the falling sprays of foam,
The sky-encircled windy dome
Rolls still, and throbs in misty space,
And all the heaven changes place.

Now is there wrought the thunder-song;
Inspir'd spirits float along
The marge of the tempest, and they bear
The wandering angels to their lair.

The moon peers through the rows of pines;
The blue and silver water shines
Like a great opal set in gold:
The forest gleams; the night grows cold.

Over the lake a whisper floats,
And in the air resound soft notes:
And all the west of life is still,—
Unheard the melodies that thrill.

Still drop by drop the dew is poured
From the white Chalice and the Sword
Sways to and fro beneath the moon,
In rhythm to the secret rune.

Relentless in the eyes of spring,
The music-notes have burst; the string
Is tense with rapture; kisses flow
In a gray cloud to earth aglow.

The flush of dawn, the pink of love,
The red-gold notes that bear the dove
Upon his embassy afar—
The golden lyric of a star.

Even as purple heather sways
Beneath the wind that, passing, plays,
The darkened woodlands sway and stir
Beneath the windy messenger. . . .

VI

THE waters green in liquid cadence fall;
They trickle through the brown moss on the wall:
They sink in tiny puddles at the base,
Wherein is mirrored all the sky's blue face.

The gray-veined ivy sends a rippling quiver
Of smiles to tremble on the tiny river:
Verdant young ivy-leaves with narrow rays
Sing of the freshness of the spring's amaze.

So drop by drop the water wanders through,
And soon the little wind plays on the wall-top high,
The lingering breezes seem to stay and sigh.