

The Swan-Song

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Oh! for a passionless dawn, love and regret far away—
Oh! for a passionless dawn over a wind-stilled bay,
For the stars are my masters in fire, and "love" breathes the passionate sea,
And ever her current flows higher, and ever it flows to me.

And I was lost in the dawn: I wandered alone in the night
Over a pathless lawn, and the stars were wan and white;
I heard the Naiads sing to the moon, and the wildering pipes of Pan;
Encircled in flame each wild note came, and maddened I turned and ran.

And so I reached the depths of hell, and lay in a rut to die,
But I heard the waters rise and swell, and the night-wind rushing by;
And the salt spray touched my lips, and straight I rose in my pain and hied
All eager and swift to the mystic Gate, and there I was shut outside.

Ah! but I heard the passion-song of a world of death and birth,
And the day was hot, and the night was long over the good green earth;
And when men heard my lays, they stayed, and scattered a meed of praise,
But I turned again from the haunts of men, to seek the nobler days.

And so I trod the mountain path, in the neat of a new-born day,
But mount and morass, by field and rath, I took my lonely way;
And heaven all around me lay, but ah! I knew not then,
And I came at the close of a summer's day back to the haunts of men.

So now I long for a passionless dawn, and the calm of the great unknown;
With a last glance over the darkened lawn, now fare I forth alone.
The silent path before me lies, and the night is still and deep;
Ever a star is before my eyes, and I lay me down to sleep.