

"For I would lonely stand,
Uplifting my white hand,
On a mission, on a mission,
To declare the coming vision.

"See mine, a holy heart,
To high ends set apart,—
All unminuted, all unminuted,
Because so consecrated.

"Upon which lifted sign,
What worship will be mine!
What addressing, what caressing,
What thanks, and praise and blessing!

"A wind-like joy will rush
Through every tree and bush,
Bending softly in affection,
And spontaneous benediction.

"Insects, that only may
Live in a sunbright ray,
To my whiteness, to my whiteness
Shall be drawn, as to a brightness.

"And every moth and bee
Shall near me reverently,
Wheeling round me, wheeling o'er me
Coronals of motioned glory.

"I ween the very skies
Will look down in surprise,
When low on earth they see me,
With my cloudy aspect dimly.

"Even nightingales shall flee
Their woods for love of me,
Singing softly all the sunlight,
Never waiting for the moonlight!

"Three larks shall leave a cloud,
To my whiter beauty vow'd,
Singing gladly all the moonlight,
Never waiting for the sunlight."

So praying she did win
South winds to let her in,
In her loneliness, in her loneliness,
And the fairer for that oneness.

But out, alas, for her!
No thing did minister
To her praises, to her praises,
More than might unto a daisy's.

No tree nor bush was seen
To boast a perfect green,
Scarcely having, scarcely having
One leaf broad enow for waving.

The little flies did crawl
Along the southern wall,
Faintly shifting, faintly shifting
Wings scarce strong enow for lifting.

The nightingale did please
To loiter beyond seas,
Guess him in the happy islands,
Hearing music from the silence.

The lark too high or low,
Did haply miss her so—
With his crest down in the gorges,
And his song in the star-courses!

Only the bee, forsooth,
Came in the place of both—
Doing honour, doing honour,
To the honey-dews upon her.

The skies look'd coldly down
As on a royal crown;
Then, drop by drop, at leisure,
Began to rain for pleasure.

Whereat the earth did seem
To waken from a dream,
Winter frozen, winter frozen,
Her anguish eyes unclosing.

Said to the rose, "Ha, Snow!
And art thou fallen so?
Thou who wert enthroned stately
Along my mountains lately.

"Holla, thou world-wide snow!
And art thou wasted so?
With a little bough to catch thee
And a little bee to watch thee?"

Poor rose, to be misknown!
Would she had ne'er been blown,
In her loneliness, in her loneliness,
All the sadder for that oneness.

Some words she tried to say,
Some sigh—ah, well away!
But the passion did o'ercome her,
And the fair frail leaves dropp'd from her.

Dropp'd from her, fair and mute,
Close to a poet's foot.
Who beheld them, smiling lowly,
As at something sad yet holy:

Said "Verily and thus,
So chancest e'er with us,
Poets, ringing sweetest snatches,
While dear did men keep the watches.

"Sauntering to come before
Our own age evermore,
In a loneliness, in a loneliness,
And the nobler for that oneness.

"But if alone we be
Where is our enquiry?
And if none can reach our stature
Who will mate our lofty nature?

"What bell will yield a tone
Saving in the air alone?
If no brazen clapper bringing,
Who can bear the chimed ringing?"

"What angel but would seem
To sensual eyes gleam-dim?
And without assimilation,
Vain is interpenetration!

"Alas! what can we do,
The rose and poet too,
Who both anticipate our mission
In an unprepared season?

"Drop leaf—be silent song—
Cold things we came among!
We must warm them, we must warm them,
Ere we even hope to enarm them.

"Howbeit! here his face
Lighten'd around the place,
So to mark the outward turning
Of his spirit's inward burning.

"Something it is to hold
In God's worlds manifold,
First reveal it to creatures duty,
A new form of His mild beauty.

"Whether that form respect
The sense or intellect,
Holy rest in soul or pleasure,
The chief Beauty's sign of presence.

"Holy in me and thee,
Rose fallen from the tree,
Though the world stand dumb around us,
All unable to expound us.

Though none us design to bless,
Blessed are we nonetheless;
Blessed age and consecrated
In that, Rose, we were created!

"Oh, shame to poet's lays,
Sung for the dote of praise—
Howarsely sung upon the highway,
With an "*adum da mihi*!"

"Shame! shame to poet's soul,
Pining for such a dote,
When heaven-called to inherit
The high throne of his own spirit!

"Sit still upon your thrones,
O ye poetic ones!
And if, sooth, the world deery you,
Why, let that world pass by you!