

AT THE END OF THE WOOING

“FROM its frail stem tear not the rose,”

you said,

“Nor brush from wings so fragile all their  
gold,

Lest in your unrewarded hand you hold  
Only, alas, torn plumes and petals dead !  
Ah, plead no more”—you bowed your  
troubled head—

“Lest we who loved and listened, dear,  
of old,

    In life's cage kiss this singing glory cold,  
And find bruised petals where the rose  
hung red !”

I take the solace, and endure the smart ;  
Bend close, O wondering brow, and turn  
to me

Those wistful lips, those eyes of mourn-  
ful blue,

Where still the old smile steals, for, light  
of heart,

The fleeting rose, the unassuaging  
voices, see,

I leave and lose, but You—oh, never You !