

ORPHEUS IN SUMMER

When the birds sing each dawn and glowing day
Follows on glowing day, when dumb with heat
The drowsy trees along the windless way
Are sweet as roses overblown are sweet.
To the warm waves that curl along the coast
I lay my heart and say my litany,
Thy name, my soul, even thine, fared forth and lost,
Long years, and shadow bound, and passed from thought of
love and me.

I sing the joy of summer. Let the tall
Dream lilies blaze their white and sweeten noon.
So mellow are my cords of gold, their call
Wakens the honey bee from happy swoon
His love to leave. But will the Shades unclothe
For notes that woo the wild gull from the sea?
Will the old earth yield up that premier rose,
That fair and tender thing that was my mate, Eurydice?

I who might bid all creatures bow their heads,
Heavy with grief at one great plaintive note,
I would not scare the ring-dove where she spreads
Her tinted wing, nor still a single throat
Of summer's ecstasy. My lute I kiss,
Remembering lyric lips once lightly curled,
Then from its chords I call our ancient bliss
And sound the soul of joy across the stirred and wondering world.